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ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN: WARFARE, POLITICS, AND FAMINE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUNGER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 14, 1988

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ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN: WARFARE, POLITICS, AND FAMINE

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 1988

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUNGER,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:14 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Mickey Leland [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Hall, Ackerman, Emerson, Gilman, and Herger.

Also present: Representative Wolpe.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MICKEY LELAND, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Chairman LELAND. The committee will come to order.

Good morning. I welcome everyone to this hearing of the Select Committee on Hunger.

The tragic events which grip the Horn of Africa and threaten literally millions of innocent people are, unfortunately, not new concerns for this committee. Ethiopia, in particular, has for several years been a country of focus and activity for many of our members.

We return to these familiar problems because the situations in both countries dictate that we do so. Civil war, religious and ethnic strife, the reckless arming of mercenaries and bandits, and a disregard for the concept of safe passage of emergency relief convoys place millions of people effectively beyond the reach of relief agencies. Policies pursued by the Governments of Ethiopia and Sudan pose a greater threat to large numbers of their people than does the renewed drought.

There are frequent and forceful allegations that emergency food assistance is being used as a political weapon. There are charges that both governments seek to obtain political and military advantages by denying food to elements of their populations—by selective starvation, in effect.

These are serious charges. Today we will examine these charges to clearly identify barriers faced in providing food to hungry people. Our interest is determining the appropriate policies for the U.S. Government to follow in these difficult and complicated situations. The primary and overriding policy objective must be getting the food to those in need. The policies must be consistent. The efforts to assure a fair and nonpolitical relief operation must be as

vigilant in an allied country as in a country with which we differ on ideology.

All of us look forward to the testimony and the dialogue with today's witnesses. These are tough questions we are dealing with today and not all of them have easy answers. But the plight of many innocent people whose lives are now endangered in the Sudan and Ethiopia requires us to proceed.

Let me ask now the gentleman from California if he has an opening statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WALLY HERGER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. HERGER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to personally thank you for agreeing to hold this hearing on what I believe is one of the most serious tragedies in recent memory. I am pleased that we will be addressing the question of hunger in Ethiopia and the Sudan and I certainly look forward to the testimonies of our witnesses from the State Department and the Agency of International Development.

Several million men, women, and children in Ethiopia are facing the most severe famine since 1984–85 when upwards of 1 million people died of starvation. While international awareness of this issue has improved substantially during the interim, it is apparent that a number of factors are leading to this year's potential disaster.

The first is the serious drought that has paralyzed the agricultural community throughout much of Central Africa. Taken alone, the drought should not automatically lead to mass starvation and suffering. However, it would appear that there is presently little evidence of food shortage in Ethiopia. On the contrary, it is reported that food is literally piled up in crates and boxes at several large ports in both Sudan and Ethiopia—piled up waiting for delivery to those who even now are on the brink of starvation. The central problem has been, and remains, the intransigence on the part of the Ethiopian Government when it comes to allowing or providing for delivery of such assistance. Literally thousands of tons of food continues to rot on the very docks where it was unloaded, while relief agencies wait weeks or even months for approval to distribute the supplies to those whose lives depend upon it. In fact, during the crisis three years ago, Soviet ships carrying military and construction equipment were actually given precedence over Western ships carrying food and supplies to the starving Ethiopian population.

Second, Ethiopian dictator Mengistu's decision to expel all foreign relief workers from a number of northern provinces has only served to place at risk millions more human beings. In fact, A.I.D. Administrator Woods had estimated that 2 to 3 million people might die as a result of this callous and unfortunate decision. It would be difficult for anyone to argue that the Ethiopian crisis of 1984–85 was not at least partially the result of Mengistu's policy of forced resettlement. Unwilling to learn from the abject failure of such programs in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and Cambodia, the government proceeded full speed ahead with a policy that is directly

responsible for the deaths of more than 100,000 Ethiopians. Clearly the Marxist government has adopted a deliberate policy of forced starvation, a policy which the Western world simply can not tolerate.

It has been widely reported that in 1985 the Ethiopian Government went as far as to spend tens of millions of dollars on a massive celebration commemorating the anniversary of Marxism in Ethiopia. This was at the very moment that tens of millions of Ethiopian citizens were near starvation. Such callous behavior is almost inconceivable.

It is also imperative that we convince rebel groups of the need to restrain from hindering legitimate government relief efforts. Some reports have claimed that as many as 100 trucks used in such attempts may have been destroyed by the rebels. Such attacks not only damage the international reputations of the groups, but lead to unnecessary suffering on the part of the very people that the rebels claim to be fighting for.

Hopefully we can discuss these issues at this hearing today. We want to know what this country can do to alleviate unnecessary delays in food distribution in Ethiopia and the resulting deaths of African citizens. As a principal supporter of the Ethiopian Government, Moscow should be pushed to demand that its client State live up to internationally recognized standards of conduct. Since 1977 the Kremlin has provided the Ethiopian Government with more than $3.5 billion in arms that have been used in the war against the rebels. The Soviet Union currently has more than 2,000 advisors in the country. Cuba has provided more than 10,000 combat troops to Mengistu's regime. I believe that Mr. Gorbachev should be aware that the Kremlin will be held at least partially responsible for the suffering and devastation that could result.

I again thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing today, and I look forward to the testimony of our distinguished witnesses. Thank you.

Chairman LELAND. I thank the gentleman from California.

The gentleman from New York?

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for conducting this hearing at a time when the need for action is so pressing with regard to the emergencies in both Ethiopia and the Sudan. I appreciate your keen interest and I am confident that with your guidance we will make some progress toward finding a way to aid those in need in Ethiopia and in the Sudan.

Much of the news that we have been receiving about the situation is certainly quite grim. In June, the Ethiopian Government expelled the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as the great majority of other Western relief workers from that country. There is also evidence that the government, in light of setbacks in its fight against the rebels, has been using the donated food as a weapon against these groups by not allowing it to reach the needy civilians among them.

In the Sudan, the situation is also extremely troubling, as attempts to cultivate the land are sabotaged by armed conflict. Accordingly, we look forward to hearing from our expert witnesses so that the Congress can properly and expeditiously respond to the millions who are suffering in both of those nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LELAND. The Chair now recognizes the ranking minority member, Mr. Emerson, from Missouri.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BILL EMERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. EMERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you most sincerely for scheduling this hearing, and I apologize for my tardiness and for the fact that I am probably going to be in and out of here today. As a member of the House Committee on Agriculture, let me note that we are marking up the Drought Disaster Relief bill today, and the chairman has said that he hopes that we will be able to report it by sometime this afternoon. There are over 50 pending amendments, so our scheduling convergence did not work out very well for today and for that, I apologize, I am grateful to you for holding this hearing which is on a subject of great concern, the extremely serious hunger problems in Ethiopia and Sudan. This committee has devoted considerable attention to these countries in the past, but given the recent developments in the gravity of the situation, it is entirely appropriate that we once again examine the famine and suffering that grip the Ethiopian and Sudanese people. On March 10 of this year, the committee held a hearing on hunger in Africa, including Ethiopia and Sudan. It was clear from that hearing that, while drought played a role in the emergencies, the main cause of hunger there was war. We have learned many lessons about how to deal with natural disasters, but man-made famines present a much different challenge. The cruelty and indifference that caused the suffering can also block efforts to help the innocent victims.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Ethiopia. Just as relief agencies were preparing one of the most comprehensive responses in history to the famine in the northern provinces, the Ethiopian Government expelled almost all Western relief workers from the war-torn provinces of Eritrea and Tigray. The Mengistu government has also expelled the International Committee of the Red Cross from the entire country. To my knowledge, the last regime to take similar action was the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia before that murderous group killed one-third of the population.

The cynical and ruthless action of the Mengistu regime could condemn over 1 million people to starvation in the near future. It is a clear attempt to use food as a weapon against civilians caught in a civil war. I cannot avoid the conclusion that the Ethiopian Government, having failed to achieve a military victory, is now prepared to use starvation as an instrument of state policy. This brutality should be condemned by all civilized people. Those who support the Ethiopian Government, especially the Soviet Union and Cuba, also stand accused of aiding and abetting this crime against humanity.

Turning briefly to Sudan, the civil war in the south is producing a flood of refugees, many in very poor condition. I will be interested in hearing from our witnesses exactly what is being done to alleviate the suffering, both in the short term by way of emergency assistance and in the long term in the form of an end to the war.

I would also like to hear from our witnesses their assessment of the difference between the situation in Ethiopia and Sudan. There have been criticisms that the United States has not responded equally to each emergency. I suspect that this is because the circumstances are not the same in each case, and I look forward to hearing more on this subject.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I understand that at the March 10 hearing the administration witnesses came under some vigorous questioning about the adequacy of our relief operation in Ethiopia, especially regarding the number of trucks available for transporting food. I believe that subsequent events have vindicated the judgment of A.I.D. on this issue. Perhaps there is a lesson here that Congress, in its oversight responsibilities, should avoid the temptation to micromanage foreign policy.

I travelled to Ethiopia during the last famine and witnessed the tremendous job the A.I.D. and the private voluntary organizations were doing there. In some ways they have an even more difficult task ahead of them this time. They deserve our support, and I look forward to hearing their testimony. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Emerson appears at the conclusion of the hearing, see p. 29.]

Chairman LELAND. I thank the gentleman.

I have a written statement from Mr. Mfume that will, without objection, be entered into the record of today's hearing.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mfume appears at the conclusion of the hearing, see p. 32.]

Chairman LELAND. We are pleased to have with us today Mr. Kenneth Brown, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, and Mr. Walter Bollinger, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa, Agency for International Development. Mr. Brown and Mr. Bollinger are both knowledgeable experts on Ethiopia and the Sudan, and will speak to us about the food emergencies and related political situations in these countries.

We welcome you, gentlemen, and we are very happy to have you with us today.

We will first hear from Mr. Brown, and then from Mr. Bollinger. We also ask you to introduce your colleagues, if you will, and then proceed.

STATEMENT OF KENNETH BROWN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, ACCOMPANIED BY JOHN DAVISON, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BROWN. Thank you Mr. Chairman. On my left is John Davison, who is the Director for East African Affairs in the Department of State. I will ask Deputy Assistant Administrator Bollinger to introduce his associate.

Mr. BOLLINGER. On my right is Bill Garvelink, Assistant Director, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, we welcome the opportunity to meet with this committee this morning to review developments in the Horn of Africa. As you know the administration testified on hunger, war, and politics in the Horn on two previous occasions this year. On March 10 before this Committee and on April 21 before the Africa and Human Rights Subcommittees. My written testimony is an update of events in Ethiopia and a summary of where our relief efforts stand in Sudan.

The situations in both countries continue to be troubling. Our most urgent efforts in Sudan and Ethiopia are aimed at moving food through whatever mechanisms are available to the victims of war and famine. But our efforts are also based on the recognition that relief and food issues cannot be separated from the politics of war in each nation, and more fundamentally, that the situations in the two countries are significantly different.

Sudan presents problems of geography and logistics different from Ethiopia. Its political environment is also radically different. In Sudan, an elected government, with an active parliament and an open press, pursues political approaches and negotiated solutions to the basic issues of the internal conflict. That it has been unsuccessful so far in reaching a solution to the conflict should not obscure the fundamental point that Sudan understands the connection between famine and war. Prime Minister Sadiq El Mahdi's now publicly stated proposal for negotiations with the SPLA has three elements, combining consideration of relief and humanitarian needs with the issues of a cease fire and a constitutional conference. The government generally welcomes outside relief efforts. It is possible to note problems, voice criticism, and work constructively in Sudan, both on humanitarian issues and on the armed conflict which is largely responsible for them.

Contrast this with Ethiopia where a regime responsible only to itself apparently sees no connection between an infinitely protracted war and continued famine, puts forth no meaningful proposals for negotiating with opponents, continues to support an insurgency in Sudan, and keeps outside donors at arm's length.

In Ethiopia we can draw some encouragement from the fact that the international presence is slowly expanding in the north and that food distribution there is being maintained at a constant level. In rebel-controlled areas, the Eritrean and Tigrean opposition movements are conducting successful relief operations. Unfortunately, the worst impact of famine in Ethiopia may still come, so we must continue to push for greater access and faster food delivery, even as we prepare for mass internal migrations and camps.

In Sudan the United States has prepositioned food so that during the course of the past year there have been adequate supplies for all donor efforts there, such as the U.N., PVO's, UNHCR, and the Government of Sudan. We are also pleased to report that efforts to involve the International Committee of the Red Cross in feeding operations on both sides of the battle lines, at long last, appear to be coming to fruition. In the absence of a political settlement and true peace, this sort of arrangement is the best possible solution to the problem of feeding the victims of conflict and drought.

Mr. Chairman, the administration will continue pursuing every avenue to deliver food to needy victims in Ethiopia and Sudan. We are sure that your committee and the American public support vigorous pursuit of humanitarian relief efforts in these two countries. The next several months will be crucial ones requiring all our vigilance and support. I assure you we will be active, bearing in mind the sharp differences in approach to humanitarian issues which create different operating environments in Ethiopia and Sudan. I will be pleased to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brown appears at the conclusion of the hearing, see p. 43.]

Chairman LELAND. Our next witness is Mr. Bollinger.

Mr. Bollinger.

STATEMENT OF WALTER BOLLINGER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (U.S. A.I.D.), ACCOMPANIED BY WILLIAM GARVELINK, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. BOLLINGER. Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I will submit my written statement for the record and present a brief oral statement this morning.

Chairman LELAND. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BOLLINGER. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to have the opportunity to update you and the committee members this morning on the U.S. Government's efforts to assist victims of emergencies in Ethiopia and the Sudan. My colleague, Ken Brown, has already discussed the political dimensions of these emergencies and I will discuss the relief programs that are being undertaken by the United States to help people in need.

The situation in both countries is serious indeed. As you know, several million people continue to be at risk and substantial obstacles continue to stand in the way of providing them with the assistance that they need.

In Sudan, the greatest problem is in the south, where civil strife enormously complicates the implementation of relief programs. We judge that roughly 700,000 to 1 million people are affected in this region. Many of them are not accessible. Government control in the south has been reduced to five or six garrison towns. The rest of the countryside in the south, an area larger than Texas, but with fewer paved roads than the District of Columbia, is controlled by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, or SPLA. Little information is available about the situation in government-controlled areas, and even less is available about the areas held by the SPLA.

The donors and the Sudanese Government have attempted for the past few years to position food and relief supplies on the perimeter of the south. Opportunities to deliver supplies into the south have been seized as they have arisen. Since 1987, the United States has approved the prepositioning of slightly more than $9 million of emergency relief assistance, including 32,000 tons of food. Because of logistics problems and the lack of security, regrettably, only about half of this amount has actually been delivered. This year,

we intensified efforts to get food and medical supplies into the south. This was done in several ways.

First, the U.N. and the Government of Sudan organized river convoys, but the barges incurred numerous delays. When they finally got going, the crews were frequently attacked from the shore by the SPLA.

Second, railway and truck convoys were organized, but they also failed to deliver much food. Only several-hundred tons got through at a time. Moreover, the onset of the rainy season makes this method of delivering relief much tougher to use.

Third, the United States swapped grain with Kenya and then an American PVO moved the swapped food overland from Kenya through Uganda and Zaire into Southwestern Sudan. But the route turned out to be so difficult, due to the poor state of the roads and bridges, that only a few thousand tons have been delivered to date.

Last, donors, including the United States, attempted to airlift food to the south from Northern Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda, but the SPLA threatened to bring down relief aircraft with ground-to-air missiles.

At this point in time, we understand that the International Committee of the Red Cross has worked out an arrangement with the Government of Sudan and the SPLA to permit parallel assessment of the conditions of three towns on each side of the line in the south. It is our strong hope that these assessments will lead soon to ICRC-implemented emergency relief programs. If requested, we stand prepared to assist the ICRC in this effort.

In Ethiopia, the United States is providing approximately $115 million in emergency assistance this year. This assistance is being used to help the roughly 7 million people at risk. Of this number, 3 to 4 million are in the south. There are also roughly 275,000 Southern Sudanese refugees who have fled to Southwestern Ethiopia, and recently a new group of refugees from Somalia has moved into Eastern Ethiopia. While there are problems in implementing relief programs aimed at these groups, the problems are being at least partially resolved in one fashion or another.

For the 3.2 million people at risk in the war zones of Northern Ethiopia, however, it is a different story. Notwithstanding the fighting in the north and the sometimes difficult working relationships with the Government of Ethiopia, a patchwork series of relief programs was put together which functioned pretty well until last April. Relief was also being provided by the humanitarian branches of the rebel organizations. Thus, it appeared that a large number of people in need in the north were being reached. The expulsion of relief workers from Northern Ethiopia on April 6, 1988, however, led to a contraction of foreign PVO relief programs in areas controlled by the government and in contested areas. Ethiopian PVO's and the government relief agencies alone are probably unable to provide sufficient assistance for the people in need, especially those in contested areas. At this point, we judge that roughly 800,000 to 1.2 million people in need in Eritrea and Tigray provinces are not being helped.

We strongly believe that the Government of Ethiopia should permit foreign relief workers to return to the north, particularly those who are willing to carry out distribution in contested areas.

Although a few U.N. personnel have been allowed to return, it is important that expatriate relief staff be allowed once again to independently monitor the distribution of relief commodities.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that we remain dedicated to helping victims of the tragedies in Sudan and Ethiopia. In this regard, we are continuing to search for new opportunities to get assistance to needy people, especially in the strife-torn areas of Southern Sudan and Northern Ethiopia. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and the appreciation of the Agency for International Development for the interest of the Select Committee on Hunger in our area. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bollinger appears at the conclusion of the hearing, see p. 52.]

Chairman LELAND. Thank you, Mr. Bollinger.

Mr. Brown, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Williamson has criticized the United Nations for the way in which it has dealt with the Ethiopian Government's policies and actions regarding the current emergency. He said that the U.S. Government has saved lives merely by publicly raising the issue of the Ethiopian Government's conduct. He said, "We must never leave ourselves open to the shame of silence." Our policy in the Sudan is quite similar to the U.N. stance in Ethiopia. When was your last public outcry on the policies of the Sudanese Government, which leaves several hundred-thousand people on the brink of starvation? Why have we heard so little from the State Department on the problems in the Sudan?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, I think we need, in the first instance, to recall the differences in the systems in Ethiopia and the Sudan, and the differences in our relations with those two countries. We are contrasting a closed society and an open society. We are contrasting a situation in which, in Ethiopia, we do not have ready access to a government which is open to dialog with us. Whereas, in Sudan, we have very easy access. We have a situation in which Prime Minister Sadiq and other members of his government are easily accessible to our Ambassador and to other members of our Embassy. They are open to dialog, open to discussions of how to resolve these questions. That does not mean that we have not spoken out publicly in regard to the situation in Sudan when the need arises and when it is appropriate to do so. In Sudan, we have found that because of the willingness of the government to join with us in discussing ways to solve these problems by bringing in other donors to discuss ways to address these difficult problems, we have been successful in getting positive responses from the Sudanese Government in ways that would not have been possible otherwise.

Chairman LELAND. Let me ask you this. I know about the seemingly endless series of discussions and negotiations with officials in Khartoum about these problems. Just what are we doing to more forcefully demand changes in the way that things are being done there? Recent press reports detail government-armed militiamen in the Sudan destroying and stealing relief food. There appears to be a campaign to exterminate the Dinka people of the south. Government authorities, time and time again, prevent food convoys from reaching the south. Can you comment on that?

Mr. BROWN. We do not believe that it is the policy of the Sudanese Government either to carry out a policy of extermination in the south or to systematically deny food to the south. On the contrary, they have been cooperative with relief agencies to try to insure that food is delivered to the south. They face a multitude of problems in succeeding in such delivery, not only because of terrain, because of a woefully inadequate communications structure, but also because of obstacles from the side of the opposition in the south where there have been attacks on convoys and relief trains and on food barges going to the south. So although there certainly have been problems and delays in the delivery of food, the policy of the government is to try to get the food there.

Chairman LELAND. Sometimes you know, policies can be established, yet very different actions can be taken than what the policies dictate. Do you not find evidence of this in the Sudan?

Mr. BROWN. I think certainly that there have been abuses in the south. There certainly have been situations in which the civilian population has been subjected to abuse. What I am saying is that it is not government policy to do that and that when these instances arise, we do have discussions with them to find ways in which we might find remedies to these problems. Sometimes they respond in ways which are effective and sometimes they do not. There are situations on the ground in which these problems do exist, but we do not believe that it is the policy of the government.

Chairman LELAND. Does the U.S. Government policy of being rather quiet concerning events in the Sudan stem from the fact that Chester Crocker characterizes our relationship with the Sudan as being one of a few essential strategic relationships in Africa? Do we have to somewhat walk on eggshells as we proceed to address these terrible problems in the Sudan?

Mr. BROWN. No, I would not say that we are walking on eggshells. I would say that we have a relationship with Sudan in which we do try to engage them on these problems and we try, in particular, to engage them on the much broader problem, which is fundamental to all of these instances that we are talking about. That is the fundamental broader problem of the war. We have been engaged with them to discuss ways in which they can bring this war to an end. Some of the other problems are going to continue whether it is the government's policy or not. The basic problem is bringing an end to that war, and we believe that the government wants to bring it to an end. They have put forth proposals to the SPLA which we think are steps in the right direction that could lead to negotiations which we hope the SPLA will respond to, and which could bring an end to the war.

Chairman LELAND. There is a vote on the House floor now. We will return promptly after a short recess.

[Recess.]

Chairman LELAND. The committee will again come to order.

The Chair would like to acknowledge the arrival of the chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Wolpe. The Chair will now yield to him for any questions that he might have of our witnesses.

Mr. WOLPE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I regret that I was not present during the early portion of this morning's hearing, but I am familiar with the testimony that was presented in written form and I would like to ask some questions based upon that.

First of all, Mr. Bollinger, you point out that the physical condition of people at risk in Northern Ethiopia is "somewhat better" than those at risk in Southern Sudan. But there is very little in your statement that refers in concrete terms to the fate of individuals in the Sudan. I wonder if you would please discuss with us what you know of the death rates from starvation-related causes among the Southern Sudanese and could you please be as specific as possible in that accounting?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Mr. Congressman, we have very little detailed information on the situation in Southern Sudan. We do know, based on isolated sporadic accounts, that the death rates in the garrison towns are very high.

Mr. WOLPE. They are very high. What does that mean?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Based on newspaper accounts, they appear to be sometimes 15 to 20 to 25 per day in towns where the population is 25,000 to 30,000.

Mr. WOLPE. Well, let me give you what I understand the situation to be, and then you tell me whether you think this is accurate or not. I understand that in the town of Wau, 15 to 30 people are dying per day. This is a town of 160,000 last year, that currently has only 80,000 of its population remaining, of whom 30,000 are at immediate risk, 25,000 are in makeshift shelters, and 5,000 are reportedly sleeping in the streets. Is that consistent with your information?

Mr. BOLLINGER. It is.

Mr. WOLPE. In the town of Torit, 20 are dying each day.

Mr. BOLLINGER. I don't have information on that, but it is generally not inconsistent with our understanding.

Mr. WOLPE. In the town of Aweil, we receive reports that there have been up to 800 people dying in a week. Last April, over 10,000 people left by train toward Khartoum; 7,000 were forced from the train on route and 30 died on route. In the Khartoum train station, reportedly, six children died; others perished in Khartoum. The town of Pibor is within SPLA territory. This town has about 3,000 people per week passing through it on route to refugee camps in Ethiopia. An estimated 25 percent are dying, which would be 750 people. There are reportedly 65 percent malnutrition rates. While death rates are not available in every instance, there are reports that there are Sudanese in various parts of the country that are in desperate condition and up to half of the population is reportedly malnourished. Many thousands of people have been displaced and are in very bad health. In Khartoum, an estimated 600,000 to 1.2 million southerners, most living as displaced persons, are hanging by a thread to basic survival. Is all of that consistent with your understanding of the situation?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Yes.

Mr. WOLPE. Then why didn't any of that detail appear in your testimony?

Mr. BOLLINGER. It did not appear in my testimony because we do not have hard evidence that this is the case. We understand from

the sporadic reporting we get from the south that the conditions are extremely dire. We understand that the death rate in the garrison towns is on the order of the magnitude that you described. But we do not have people in that area; the expatriate PVO presence is very limited, and the ICRC has only just obtained approval from both sides to carry out an assessment of the situation in six cities in Southern Sudan. We simply do not have the kind of hard information that we felt would substantiate putting specific figures in my statement.

Mr. WOLPE. Mr. Bollinger, you offer several reasons for the slowness of the government's response to the horrible crisis: lack of data, economic depression, underdevelopment, inexperienced bureaucrats, and primitive communications, to name a few. Almost all other observers, though, put much of the blame on the government's indifference to the lives of southerners. Let me read you two quotations and then invite your reactions to these judgments.

International Red Cross operations are at a standstill, reflecting an appalling lack of concern on the part of the Government of Sudan's military authorities toward the suffering of the people considering the ICRC reports of starvation in Wau.

And the second quotation,

In Khartoum, the government's rationing has progressed from a position of denying official assistance and hostility toward private initiatives toward displaced persons, to no action at all.

What is your reaction to those quotes? Do you think they are accurate or inaccurate?

Mr. BOLLINGER. You are reading, I believe, from our telegrams.

Mr. WOLPE. That is correct. In fact, not only are these two quotations taken from unclassified cables from our Embassy in the Sudan; so were the previous reports that I mentioned earlier, presenting statistical data on the rates of death and malnutrition in the Sudan.

Mr. BOLLINGER. That is correct.

Mr. WOLPE. But a moment ago, you said you did not have any hard evidence.

Mr. BOLLINGER. The sources cited in those telegrams are not hard evidence. They were reports that were often picked up from secondary sources and they were not the kind of authoritative sources that——

Mr. WOLPE. Do you think there is any manner in which the testimony that you have presented before this committee today could be considered to be inconsistent with the tone and thrust of the judgments from our Embassy in Sudan?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Mr. Congressman, I do not think that there is any disagreement between us that the situation in Southern Sudan is a dire one. I do not think it is fruitful to get into a numbers exchange.

Mr. WOLPE. No, I don't think this is fruitless to get into that kind of discussion. I am very concerned about the tone and thrust of your testimony, and I am asking again, is there any way in which the tone and thrust of your testimony might be considered as inconsistent with reports from our own Embassy in the Sudan?

Mr. BOLLINGER. It was not intended to be that way, and in my view it is not.

Mr. WOLPE. Is it true that several-thousand tons of relief food disappeared and has not been accounted for from Raga last year?

Mr. BOLLINGER. I believe that is accurate.

Mr. WOLPE. And although several convoys went from Raga to Wau, where people were starving, no food was included. Is that correct?

Mr. BOLLINGER. I can't say that for a fact.

Mr. WOLPE. Is there anyone here that would have that information at their disposal?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Apparently not.

Mr. WOLPE. Would you provide that for the record?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Yes.

Chairman LELAND. The Chair will keep the record open for the purpose of the receipt of the response to the question.

[The information referred to above follows:]

SUDAN—MISSING FOOD RELIEF

Last year there were reports that several thousand tons of relief food destined for Wau were lost before they were delivered to intermediary relief organizations. There have been allegations that military authorities in Sudan were responsible for this action. The Government of Sudan has firmly stated that it is not its policy to expropriate relief supplies. It has undertaken an investigation into this incident but has not yet reported the results of its investigation. We have continued to press the Sudanese Government to finish their investigation as soon as possible. Although we have no means of independently verifying the situation in the south, we understand that it is true that several convoys that did not contain relief food travelled from Raga to Wau in 1987.

Mr. WOLPE. I do not want to abuse my time, Mr. Chairman. I have more questions but I can withhold them.

Chairman LELAND. If the gentleman can withhold.

Mr. Brown, would you like to say something?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, Mr. Davison had a comment in reaction to the Congressman's question.

Chairman LELAND. Mr. Davison.

Mr. DAVISON. Just concerning the misplaced food at Raga—I think that was correct. There was food that was misplaced, but we understand that it has been found now by someone so that the deficit at Raga has been made up. The food has been accounted for.

Mr. WOLPE. But we don't know whether the reports were accurate—that there were several convoys that went from Raga to Wau, where people were known to be starving, but no food was included in those convoys?

Mr. DAVISON. As far as we know, in Sudan, one of the problems is that food sometimes is included in convoys with other things. There are military convoys and food convoys, but they tend to be mixed together. That has brought the attention of the SPLA in some instances.

Mr. WOLPE. My understanding is that our Embassy understands the situation to be that there were at least four convoys that travelled from Raga to Wau that had no food, even though there was the knowledge at the time that starvation was occurring in that area. Are you saying that you just don't know that, or that we don't know that in terms that our Government did not know that?

Mr. DAVISON. We know that there have been convoys that have not contained food, and there are convoys that got through and others that have not.

Mr. WOLPE. Is it true that Sudan is charging 12 Sudanese pounds per sack for the off-loading of grain in the south, which is more than the price of the food, while off-loading in the north costs only 1 pound? Mr. Bollinger.

Mr. BOLLINGER. I do not know that for a fact but, based on my understanding of the discrepancies between charges in the north and charges in the south, that is very likely.

Mr. WOLPE. I do not understand your response.

Mr. BOLLINGER. I can not confirm that specific citation, but it is not inconsistent with my understanding of the problems that we are encountering in delivering food to the south, which has higher charges than are levied in other parts of the country.

Mr. WOLPE. Would that not be attributable to government policy?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Indirectly, yes. We understand that excessive charges are levied by the private sector but not by the government itself. To date, the government has been unable to get private merchants to lower these prices.

Mr. WOLPE. Mr. Bollinger, hasn't the ICRC's effort since March to get an agreement for simultaneous surveys in the few government-held towns in the south been continually thwarted by the government?

Mr. BOLLINGER. The problems have come from both sides. As I said during my oral statement, both sides have now agreed on the arrangement whereby the ICRC will carry out surveys in three cities on each side of the line.

Mr. WOLPE. Is it not true that twice there were attempts to carry out such surveys, and twice the government stopped those efforts from going forward?

Mr. BOLLINGER. I believe that is correct.

Mr. WOLPE. And didn't the same thing happen in 1986?

Mr. BOLLINGER. I cannot confirm that.

Mr. WOLPE. Why do you believe that the most recent agreement will be followed through on when the previous agreements were not executed by the government?

Mr. BOLLINGER. I believe that the most recent agreement stands a better chance because all critical elements of the Sudanese Government have endorsed the arrangement.

Chairman LELAND. If the gentleman can withhold, we will get back to him.

The Chair will now recognize the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Emerson.

Mr. EMERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Could any of you summarize the efforts the United States has taken in an attempt to reverse the Ethiopian Government's expulsion of Western relief workers from the northern provinces?

Mr. BOLLINGER. We have taken several efforts. First—notwithstanding the fact that we have limited access with Ethiopian authorities in Addis Ababa—we have attempted to prevail upon them and convince them that the decisions which they took should be reversed. Second, we have, in our own public diplomacy, made a

number of public statements in which we have decried the decision of April 6, and in various public fora we have asked that the Government of Ethiopia reverse that decision. In addition, we have worked with the donor community both in the donor capitals and in Addis Ababa in an attempt to use other governmental influence on the Government of Ethiopia to have that April 6 decision reconsidered. Last, we have supported efforts on the part of the United Nations, including efforts by the Secretary General himself during a recent trip to Ethiopia, during which the matter was discussed at high levels.

Mr. EMERSON. What has been the general response of the Mengistu government?

Mr. BOLLINGER. There has been no change in that policy except for a slight softening with regard to U.N. personnel, and at this particular point in time, there are five U.N. officials in Northern Ethiopia, three of them as food monitors who are concerned with transport.

Mr. EMERSON. What has been their attitude about the PVO's?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Their attitude toward expatriate PVO's has not changed, which is that PVO presence in Northern Ethiopia is not permitted to continue.

Mr. EMERSON. What is the reason that they give?

Mr. BOLLINGER. The reason they cite relates to the security situation in Northern Ethiopia; as the security situation deteriorated—as the rebel organizations in both Tigray and Eritrea stepped up their military actions against the Ethiopian Government—the Ethiopian Government took the posture that it was unsafe for expatriate relief personnel to be present in those provinces and asked for their withdrawal.

Mr. EMERSON. What do we know of the Ethiopian Government's attempt to administer food relief?

Mr. BOLLINGER. We know that the Ethiopian Government's attempt to administer food relief does not extend beyond government-held territories. The government-held territories have become much smaller than they were 6 months ago, so one can conclude that the Ethiopian Government's own efforts to provide assistance to people in need is perhaps not effective.

Mr. EMERSON. I ask these questions because when this committee went there in 1984 it was my conclusion that the PVO's deserved all the credit in the world for virtually all of the good that was done there. I don't know how the things that were done could have possibly been done without them. Therefore, I don't know what can possibly be being done now that they are not there. Catholic Relief, Lutheran World Services, World Vision—I probably shouldn't mention any of them or I might leave someone out—those three come particularly to mind as having done such a very outstanding and effective job there. I am greatly perplexed that they are not welcome on the scene there now.

Mr. BOLLINGER. We obviously share those concerns. I should also point out that in addition to the Government of Ethiopia Relief Commission operations in Northern Ethiopia, that local indigenous PVO's have continued to function there. Their activities have been restricted to government-held areas, but they have attempted to

expand their operation somewhat to compensate for the withdrawal of the expatriate PVO presence.

Mr. EMERSON. Has there been any indication at all from the Mengistu government on letting some of the organizations that I mentioned move back in there?

Mr. BOLLINGER. With the exception of these five U.N. personnel, there has been no change in Ethiopian Government policy of which I am aware.

Mr. EMERSON. I don't know what five U.N. personnel could do. Anything that they could do would be exceedingly limited. It's most unfortunate.

In view of the recent developments between the United States and the Soviet Union, such as the meeting of the Heads of State, there is potentially a new climate for certain opportunities developing that have not previously existed. I understand that President Reagan and some senior department officials did touch on the Ethiopian situation when the President was recently in Moscow. I wonder if there has been any Soviet reaction to whatever might have been said there, particularly Soviet reaction to the expulsion of the PVO's and of Western efforts to reverse that condition?

Mr. BROWN. The general Soviet approach has been that the Ethiopian Government is responsible for relief programs and it should be left to them to decide who, for security or any other reasons, would be allowed to come into the area that needs relief. They say that they have discussed these issues, however, with Ethiopian Government, both in terms of assuring that relief gets to the needy and in the question of a political solution over the long term, which we feel is the only way that this situation is going to be resolved.

Mr. EMERSON. So the Soviets are indicating that they are talking to the Mengistu government, but is there any indication that they are bringing real pressure or are they just deferring to the Mengistu government to follow whatever policy it will?

Mr. BROWN. We do not know for certain the content of the discussions. We do feel that, over time, they will recognize that the long-term solution has got to be settlement of the war. So we hope that what they are saying to the Ethiopians is that there has to be a discussion between the government and these movements up in the north to bring about some way of compromise.

Mr. EMERSON. What motivated the Mengistu government to expel Western relief workers? In other words, what were they attempting to accomplish? What was their goal?

Mr. BROWN. They said at the time that it was for security purposes and the safety of those involved. Part of that, of course, was that people who wanted to work there were willing to do so at their own risk. We felt at the time that perhaps the primary motivation was that they did not want outsiders there at a time when they would be carrying out operations against the movements in the north. As you know, the Ethiopian regime is one which is insular, one which does not like to have outsiders observing what they do one way or the other. They felt that it was their right to close off that area.

Mr. EMERSON. PVO's are very committed people. I do think that we have an obligation to be concerned about their welfare, and any government that might be the host does also. At the same time, I

am concerned that their expulsion could be for other reasons, possibly just to lock up the area so that we don't know what is going on there. I think it is very useful to have PVO's there administering the relief that they do and, frankly, I never found them to be politically motivated one way or the other. I think that they have a humanitarian concern and are really rather oblivious to politics.

What was the cause and the nature of the dispute between the Government of Ethiopia and the ICRC?

Mr. DAVISON. We do not know in great detail what the specific cause of the dispute was. We would imagine that there were some misunderstandings between the way that the ICRC always operates and insists upon operating, which is in an independent fashion, and the concern that Mr. Brown pointed to, of sensitivities on the Ethiopian side to activities that are perceived as being perhaps too independent in the territory under their control. The ICRC involvement was very significant up there. They were accounting for a very large share of the feeding that was being done and it is, of course, regrettable that they have been removed. That has been one of the primary items that we have discussed among the other donors, and indeed, have discussed with the Soviets as a case where we hope that their influence could be brought to bear to get the ICRC back into business there.

Mr. EMERSON. Well what do you think the effect of the expulsion will be there? How do you assess the effect of their not being there?

Mr. DAVISON. The long-term effect of it will certainly be very negative. The short-term effect seems to have been that some of the slack has been taken up by an expansion of some of the JRP operation, which is affiliated with Catholic Relief Services and which does its work through indigenous Catholic relief organizations in the northern part of Ethiopia. Their operations have expanded, but the ICRC is particularly good at getting food into these "no man's lands" and areas that are under questionable control, so their presence and input is going to be missed in the next few months.

Mr. EMERSON. Is there any example of the ICRC being thrown out of any other country in an emergency disaster situation such as that which exists in Ethiopia?

Mr. DAVISON. I'm not an expert on that.

Mr. EMERSON. If you know of any examples I would appreciate you supplying us with that.

How is the food that is already in Ethiopia now being distributed, and how are we monitoring the distribution?

Mr. BOLLINGER. First of all, I believe it is important to point out that the relief programs in other areas of Ethiopia are going forward unhindered and PVO operations are continuing to be implemented. What we are really talking about is the north and the consequences of the withdrawal of expatriate PVO's from the north, particularly the ICRC, because they operated in the "gray" areas between the two sides, and they were very important in meeting needs in those areas. I also want to point out that in Gondar alone the ICRC was fully responsible for a program reaching 250,000 beneficiaries, and with the withdrawal of the ICRC from that province there is no immediately available PVO to move in and fill that

vacuum. In Eritrea and Tigray, the situation is somewhat better because of the presence of indigenous organizations. These organizations have been able to pick up some beneficiaries from the ICRC rolls.

In the north, we estimate that there are roughly 3.2 million people at risk. Our best judgment is that, from the government side, through the indigenous PVO's and the government relief efforts, roughly 1 million people are being reached. It is also important to understand that the rebel organizations have their own relief efforts and that those relief arms have been surprisingly effective in providing assistance to large numbers of people in Tigray and Eritrea. Evidence indicates that perhaps as many as 1.3 million people are being helped by the relief arms of the resistance groups in Tigray and Eritrea, so that nets out to roughly 850,000 to 1.2 million people who are not being helped at this particular point in time, and therein lies the tragedy of this situation.

Mr. EMERSON. There have been some allegations that the Ethiopian Government uses donated food for its military. Are you confident that the food donated by the United States is not being used by the military?

Mr. BOLLINGER. Yes, sir; indeed I am. All of the food has been made available for distribution by PVO's. Until April 6, it was fully monitored by PVO personnel. There was not one instance brought to our attention during the course of relief activity of any significant diversion or unauthorized use, and we think that the record is indeed unblemished.

Mr. EMERSON. Your agency has predicted that Ethiopia will face a structural food deficit of major proportions unless the government adopts economic reforms to encourage greater production. Can you elaborate on this subject? How much will the shortage be, and how much is it going to cost to provide assistance to meet it?

Mr. BOLLINGER. We estimate that by the end of this century, the structural deficit will be running at 2 million tons per year. We think that this is brought about, to a very large degree, by very backward economic policies being carried out by the Government of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is an anachronism in Africa today. The winds of change are blowing across the continent, away from state-directed economies to more liberal reform-oriented economies, yet we do not see that in Ethiopia. You have a situation in which the prices paid to producers have remained constant for 10 years. There was a slight increase of 7 percent this past year, but that is not expected to have a significant ripple effect throughout the system or to significantly increase production. In addition, you have constraints on the trading of agricultural commodities. Commodities cannot move from surplus areas into deficit areas without the approval of government authorities. The heavy hand of the bureaucracy is everywhere and we believe that until new policies are put into place which will increase the yield and the financial benefit to the individual farmer, until he sees a return for his own effort, until the agricultural sector incurs significant reform, there will be substantially little opportunity for increases in agricultural production.

Mr. EMERSON. I have a number of other questions about both Ethiopia and Sudan, but I think that I will defer to my colleagues for their opportunity.

Chairman LELAND. Again, the Chair informs the participants in this committee that he is a very generous person.

The Chair would like to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Max Macram, Bishop of El Obeod in the Sudan. I had the honor and privilege of meeting with the bishop and heard from him some of the horror of what is happening in Sudan. The bishop was not able to participate in this particular hearing, but I would like, with unanimous consent, to leave the record open for any comments that the bishop might wish to submit to the committee.

Bishop, thank you very much for your presence here today.

The gentleman from New York, Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I thank the generous Chair.

Secretary Brown, our Government has been so noticeably quiet about the circumstances that bring Southern Sudan to the brink of famine, particularly about the role of certain elements of the Sudanese Government in helping to enlarge the crisis. Earlier this year, Assistant Secretary Richard Williamson said, "There comes a time when quiet diplomacy is not enough and you have to raise your voice." What I would like to know is how much longer are we going to remain quiet before we raise our voice and challenge the actions of the Government of Sudan, which is responsible for putting so many people at risk?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Ackerman, we do raise our voice, particularly in regard to what we consider to be an underlying problem which is the root of so much of the suffering in Sudan. That is the war. We have called on both parties to negotiate, we have offered to be of assistance, and we have called upon the Sudanese Government to put its emphasis upon recognizing that this is primarily an internal conflict which has to do with the rights of a significant portion of the citizens of Sudan, citizens who have set forth grievances, many of which we certainly consider to be legitimate and which must be recognized. We have publicly and privately called upon the Sudanese Government to address that fundamental question. We also address the other questions: the abuses that take place in the south, the abuses against civilians, the abuses by armed militiamen against civilians. These are a crucial part of our dialog with the Sudanese Government which, as I noted before, is under the leadership of Sadiq El Mahdi, who has not engaged in a deliberate policy of abuses in the south, but who is heading up a country which contains so many conditions that would contribute to those kind of abuses.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Maybe I could be a little bit more specific. We have provided hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars in military assistance to the Sudan. I am given to understand that the Sudanese military regularly flies convoys into some southern cities, such as Wau and Aweil in the Sudan, and that there is never any food or commodities for any of the people that are starving there. Those planes were certainly paid for over and over again by U.S. taxpayer dollars. Do we not have any leverage?

Mr. BROWN. Let me address that in two separate ways. First of all, in regard to our military assistance program, which has declined for a number of reasons. The military assistance program is devoted in a very large part to assisting in logistics, transport, and training. It is not very large any more. This year, as a matter of

fact, the budget for Sudan was "zero." In regard to the delivery of food to the south, there is a policy of the government to deliver food through various means. Those run into problems because of the insurgency in the south. They are subject to attack; airliners have been shot down, there have been threats to shoot down other planes, there have been attacks on food trains and convoys and food barges. There is also a woefully inadequate communications system.

Mr. ACKERMAN. What about the convoys that are going there and getting through? What about the truck convoys that were mentioned a few moments ago and the plane convoys that are landing on a regular basis? They are not bringing any commodities. Certainly, if you put forth the argument that the planes are going to be shot down, you must recognize that some are getting through.

Mr. BROWN. There are deliveries that are strictly military convoys and there are convoys that contain food as well. As to air delivery, I'm not sure.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am not a general, but if I was going to shoot something down, it would be the military convoys, and they are landing.

Mr. BOLLINGER. They have shot down two civilian aircraft in the south. That is not to say that we are not ever vigilant for the identification of opportunities. For example, yesterday we received a telegram from our Embassy indicating that it may be possible for an airlift to take place to Aweil, which is one of these garrison towns that Congressman Wolpe just mentioned, and we are going to provide funding for that airlift to take place. We are doing the best we can in a set of very tough circumstances.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me ask the question more bluntly. When the history of this whole thing is written, are we going to be regarded as accomplices in this horrendous policy of using food as a weapon and of starving people, maybe passive rather than active accomplices?

Mr. BROWN. I think we disagree as to whether or not there is policy of starving people in the south, and what I have said earlier is that we do not believe that the Sudanese Government has a policy of starving people in the south. It does run into problems in delivery.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Do we consider the Ethiopians as having that policy in the north?

Mr. BROWN. We do not consider that the Ethiopians have a policy of starving people.

Mr. ACKERMAN. It's just coincidental and accidental?

Mr. BROWN. We consider that the Ethiopian Government is placing its military priorities above the feeding of the people.

Chairman LELAND. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes, my generosity almost equals that of the Chair.

Chairman LELAND. Mr. Brown, we are drawing some parallels here for obvious reasons. We are trying to come to some conclusion about why there at least appears to be some inconsistency on the part of the State Department regarding the Government of Ethiopia, in terms of the way it treats its people in the north in Eritrea and Tigray provinces, and how the Government of Sudan treats its

people in the south. You are suggesting that there is no stated policy of discrimination by the Sudanese Government; yet, we know that there are atrocities and we know, at least in part, the magnitude of what is going on in terms of the starving people in the south. Is there no real parallel here? Do we not have grounds to condemn the Sudanese Government as much as we have the Ethiopian Government for the things that are happening in Southern Sudan?

Mr. BROWN. We are saying that the Sudanese Government is trying to address the problems.

Chairman LELAND. Well let me say this. There are governments in the world that have said that they have great humanitarian policies toward their own citizens, yet, they will send in the military but continue saying, "We're not responsible," when it is their military that is committing these atrocities.

Mr. BROWN. We do not say that the relief effort is adequate. I would not say that. I am saying that the government is trying and this is reflected by one of the responses to the problems that have already been raised in regard to displaced persons. The Sudanese Government has just recently issued an appeal to the United Nations to ask for assistance in regard to relief for these displaced persons, which the Secretary General has announced that he will mobilize efforts to do, and which other donors will be involved in. That is one aspect of trying to respond to the need and to work with donors in regard to the need. Certainly when you have as many people dying as are dying, the response is inadequate, but we think that the government is trying.

Mr. WOLPE. Could I ask if the gentleman from New York would continue to extend his generosity?

Mr. ACKERMAN. The generosity is further extended.

Mr. WOLPE. Thank you.

First of all, let me express my appreciation to the Chair for inviting me to join with the Select Committee on Hunger to participate in this hearing this morning. I must go elsewhere, but I do want to make this one final observation. I must say that I think that the contrast to our approach between the problem of starvation and hunger in the Sudan and that which we have pursued in Ethiopia is both dramatic and appalling. It is very disturbing. We have done some right things in speaking out as publicly as we have to the Ethiopian crisis. In fact, the language contained in the Department of Defense authorization that Congressman Roth and others have been involved in crafting which, I think, is the kind of public response that is required in the case of Ethiopia. I am amazed at the inconsistency in our approach to the Sudanese situation. The language that I quoted earlier from our own Embassy referred to "an appalling lack of concern on the part of Government of Sudan military authorities toward the suffering of the people." And then we know that such things as the following have occurred. The government forces have seized food trucks that were destined for starving people. The government has expelled four PVO's from the south. The government has engaged in charging for the little donor food that does get to the south. Then to hear it suggested that the government has less complicity in what is happening in the Sudan than the Government of Ethiopia has in the tragedy that is unfold-

ing there, I think, is contradicted by the facts of the cable traffic from our own Embassy in Khartoum. I happen to think that the rebels as well as the government are culpable for the tragedy that is unfolding in Southern Sudan. We have leverages that relate to the Government of Sudan and I certainly expect that we will apply the same standard of humanitarian concern and exercise the leverage which we do enjoy, which is greater than in the Ethiopian case. To me, it is a close question, but there is a palpable difference in our response and people are going to die as a consequence of that, which I think is inexcusable.

Mr. BROWN. Perhaps we have not made clear enough in our responses here that we do try to use our leverage with the Sudanese Government to overcome these problems and shortcomings.

Mr. EMERSON. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. WOLPE. It's not my time; it's Mr. Ackerman's.

Mr. EMERSON. Oh, excuse me.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Well, alright. [Laughter.]

Mr. EMERSON. I think there is an important difference here. The stated policies at the top of the Ethiopian Government and those in the Sudanese Government are very different. In the case of the Sudanese Government, there is rampant inefficiency in the execution of the policy. I think that in\the case of the Ethiopian Government, there is just total neglect. We could argue about that, but the stated policies of the Sudanese Government are very different from those of the Ethiopian Government, and I think that point should be noted.

Mr. WOLPE. Could I just respond to that gentleman? If you look at the pictures—and they say that a picture is worth a thousand words—then the consequences of what the gentleman is describing is kind of innocently intended neglect. It is just as severe in the Sudan as it is in Ethiopia, and again I make the observation, that a number of the items that we have discussed today, in terms of the expulsion of PVO's, in terms of the overcharging costs that are involved in getting the food to the south, the government's forced seizures of food trucks—these are not accidental inefficient actions. Someone is making some sort of decisions here. I have been in the Sudan and I think that there are a number of northerners who feel very passionately about the tragedy that is unfolding in the south. I want to see the Government of Sudan succeed. I do not view them as an adversary, but as a potentially very significant friend and ally of the United States. I just don't think that we are doing any service to our friends when we pretend that things are not there that are there.

Mr. EMERSON. If the gentleman would yield, I would like to say that I am not arguing with him at all. I am just pointing out that the policies are different. The stated policies of the Sudanese Government are ones that we can work with, enhance, and try to encourage. The end result of their not being efficient right now is deplorable, and I share your concern about that, but I am saying that at least their stated policies are ones to which we can associate ourselves. That is not true in the case of Ethiopia. Now the end result may be the same—I do not condone the end result of rampant inefficiency any more than I condone the end result of the conscious policy of the Ethiopian Government in their treatment of

the people of Tigray and Eritrea—but there is a different framework there and a different stated policy within which we have some options to pursue.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me just reclaim my generosity, if I may.

Mr. WOLPE. Thank you for that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that if we are talking about stated policy or actual policy, the net result is the same—people who are starving other people to death. It seems to me that the policy of our Government, at least if you connect the dots, is that we are trying to look at two essentially similar situations and yet we see them differently. From our right eye, looking toward those governments that are perceived to be friendly, those governments that perhaps provide us with military bases or information and that have a similar economic system, we consider their crossing the line of humanity to be benign neglect. If we look at the same identical policy being carried out by those governments who might be to the left, the vision is one that we receive basically through a jaundiced eye, and we then wind up condemning them while almost encouraging the others by our silence.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Ackerman, if I could just comment in that regard. I think that one of the important things that we are talking about today is not one of regarding or overlooking the shortcomings of our friends while we come down hard on those who are not as friendly to us. It is a question of how best to address the problem and how best to get results. We certainly do not want to leave the impression with anyone in this room that we do not take these problems seriously or that we do not deal with them with the Sudanese, because we certainly do. The cables that the Congressman was reading from reflect this concern, reflect this environment, reflect this contact and dialog that we have with the Sudanese Government. Prime Minister Sadiq El Mahdi has got a huge country on his hands. He has a complicated political system and situation that he is in the middle of—a recent formation of a coalition government has changed the dynamic of the government and of politics there. The government is not always able to cause its policies to be carried out in the vast reaches and far away places in the country, particularly down in the south. Communications are difficult and access is difficult. There is a gap between policy and performance. He recognizes that and discusses that with us. He comes to us for discussions on this and we have dialog dealing with how best to deal with these problems along with the other donors. He has been asking for assistance from the United Nations and from the other donors. That does not mean that there are not elements in Sudanese politics who do not want these things to happen. There are definitely elements within the Sudanese military that are not friendly to the cause of the people in the south, so it's a question that, yes, we do criticize our friends, and they are perhaps more accessible or receptive to what we have to say.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my generosity.

Chairman LELAND. The gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Hall.

Mr. HALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I apologize for not being here at the early part of the hearing to hear some of the early questions and the statements. I had to be on the House floor carry-

ing a rule for the Rules Committee. If I should ask a question that has been already asked, please inform me of that.

I was in Ethiopia in December of last year and, of the whole time that I was in Africa, and particularly the time that I was in Ethiopia, the one situation that was most pertinent to me was the number of hungry people. I saw a video tape one day in the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa that had been taken that morning and flown to the Embassy, concerning hundreds of Sudanese youths that I would say were between the ages of 10 and 15. At that particular time they were dying at the rate of between 10 and 15 per day in this group that had come over from Southern Sudan. I came back to the United States and reported it and I have been amazed that there has been very little media reporting of that. A tremendous number of—I wouldn't call them refugees—but hundreds and hundreds of boys were coming over the border. Apparently the press is now starting to report this. In fact, people that I saw looked as bad from the standpoint of malnutrition and devastation as I had seen 4 years ago in Ethiopia. I guess the thrust of my question is that there have been a lot of questions about the parallels between Sudan and Ethiopia and how our Government might be looking at both of those governments. My concern is that the media no longer really focuses on this region. As a matter of fact, there are probably only a handful of papers in this country that do. There are some reports starting to come out that seem to be very good on Sudan. The concern for the hungry and the poor just does not seem to be there, and I don't know what the reason is. I am not saying that Americans don't care; they do care and they are very generous. But the media, for the most part, have gone home. And when you see the PVO groups being kicked out of both Ethiopia and the Sudan, then you don't really have an independent nonpartisan group in there to report and to deliver the food and services. So what is left? There is only our Government.

In Sudan, with the tremendous numbers of refugees and the massacres that we are hearing about, the selling of young boys into slavery, and use of food as a political tool, the only group left for the poor and hungry people who are dying are a handful of reporters, if they are lucky enough to get in there and care enough to report. Or No. 2, it's got to be our Government. Quiet negotiations don't seem to work. We have been talking about quiet negotiations in the Philippines, in Korea, in Iran, all these countries—and it does not seem to work. This is a little bit different, because if we don't start to report what is going on through our Embassies and through the State Department and through U.S. A.I.D. more people will die. This is not a political question; it is a question of what our country is all about. We need to speak out in public to express our outrage about our money and food being given to a country like Sudan which is not permitting these supplies to get to the people who need them. I guess that is a statement more than a question.

My first question is: Why were the PVO's in Sudan kicked out in the first place, Mr. Brown?

Mr. BROWN. I will ask Mr. Davison to respond to that.

Mr. DAVISON. The PVO's who were asked to leave Southern Sudan were operating in the town of Wau and one other town, and they left for reasons having to do with the government's suspicion

of the activities of the members of the PVO's in the war situation down there. As background, it is important to point out that there are probably 50 or 60 or more PVO's who are presently registered and most of them are currently doing business in Sudan. There were three that were removed for those particular reasons. We made a very important effort to draw the government's attention to the fact that we thought this was the wrong decision for them to take and, indeed, pointing out that if there were problems with individuals who worked for certain PVO's, the solution would be to ask the individuals to leave, but certainly not to ask the PVO's to leave. The government investigated the reasons behind its own decision and issued a report on the subject. Where we are now is that those three PVO's are still out of Sudan, but my personal view would be that perhaps the story has not yet concluded. Meanwhile there are plenty of PVO's who are still in Sudan and are very welcome.

Mr. HALL. Who were the three PVO's that were kicked out?

Mr. DAVISON. There was ACROSS, World Vision, and Lutheran World Services.

Mr. HALL. These are rather large organizations. I am very familiar with World Vision and I cannot imagine them being connected, as nonpolitical and action-oriented as they are, in any kind of activity related to insurrection. That was the terminology that was used, wasn't it? Did you investigate that?

Mr. DAVISON. We can not imagine that either, Mr. Congressman. That is the point that we made to the Sudanese Government.

Mr. HALL. Did you make it to the Prime Minister?

Mr. DAVISON. Repeatedly.

Mr. HALL. What was his response?

Mr. DAVISON. There was a Ministry of Justice inquiry into case that resulted from our discussions with the Prime Minister and there was a full cabinet-level review of the inquiry, but the decision was upheld to deny renewal of the registration of these three organizations. We are continuing to discuss this with the government.

Mr. BROWN. We think that we have some prospects for getting one or more of them back in.

Sir, I might address the question that you raised about the Sudanese refugees in Southern Ethiopia if you would like. That is a situation which has been overlooked as far as media attention or world attention, probably because greater attention has been focused on the north and the war, but it has been a very serious situation and our Embassy has been reporting on it. We have hoped that the Ethiopian Government would allow PVO's to go down to help with that situation.

Mr. EMERSON. Could I interrupt to get the frame of reference correct here, if the gentleman would yield?

Did you say Sudanese refugees in Southern Ethiopia?

Mr. BROWN. That is correct. They are in Southwestern Ethiopia, right across the line.

Mr. EMERSON. I wanted to make sure that I understood you.

Mr. BROWN. Yes. There are approximately 290,000 people from Southern Sudan in that area. We have paid attention to it. We have tried to marshal resources to assist there and to use diplomat-

ic intervention with the Ethiopian Government in order to get them to do that and to strengthen the role of U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. We are supporting the UNHCR's assistance efforts. Traditionally, we provide 30 percent of their resources; this year, however, due to budgetary constraints, that share will be reduced to about 20 percent. We are urgently seeking to provide extra emergency funding given the dire situation of the refugees. We have offered to augment the UNHCR's program management capacity by making available a junior professional officer for Ethiopia. Also, on the diplomatic front, we have made representations to the Ethiopian Government in favor of an enhanced UNHCR implementing partner presence. We have also demanded improvements in UNHCR Ethiopia's emergency management capacity. You are right to point to that problem, but it is one that we are certainly trying to respond to.

Mr. HALL. Mr. Brown, the Atlanta Journal and Constitution had a series of articles that I'm sure you have read concerning starvation in the Horn of Africa. There have been articles that assert that the militia, armed by the Sudanese Government, are taking children of the Dinka tribe off into slavery. Further, eyewitness accounts of massacres by the militia and the army are presented. Are these incidents actually happening in Southern Sudan today?

Mr. BROWN. We do not have full information. I believe that you are referring primarily to the activities of armed militia, which were armed a couple of years ago by the Sudanese Government for the purpose of protecting against the SPLA. Unfortunately, when you introduce more modern arms into a situation in which there has been generations of rivalry between groups, that introduces a more lethal element in giving one side more advantage over the other. Certainly there are incidents in which these armed militiamen have engaged in abuses. There have been reports of massacres and of slavery. Slavery is apparently a problem that has been a problem for generations in that area and it is a problem which the British tried to combat when they were in control of Sudan. It is against the law in Sudan and it is opposed by the Sudanese Government, but there are probably instances which continue.

Mr. HALL. On these reports that you refer to, have you talked to the government about this?

Mr. BROWN. Yes. This is something that we have reported on and it one of those areas that we have been talking about this morning in which we do everything publicly in regard to Sudan and also deal with them privately. The human rights report and its forthright statements in regard to these kinds of abuses, I think, is an example of the public role of our approach to these problems.

Mr. HALL. Have you pushed the government on these incidents?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, we have. In various incidents where there have been reported abuses, we have called on the government to conduct investigations and then—one would hope on the basis of those investigations—to take action.

There has been, for example, a situation in Wau, where the commander there has been accused of abuses and the government has informed us that they intend to take action in that regard.

Mr. HALL. I am going to have to close here. We have a vote coming up.

I will just say this: We really need to be active. I think that over the past 4 or 5 years, U.S. A.I.D. has done a good job, but when things like this happen in Sudan—it's very easy to report the things that are happening in Ethiopia and we all get on the bandwagon and push—but when the PVO's are kicked out of Sudan—and these are very reputable groups, then that really bothers me. The other thing that bothers me is that there is almost no press reporting about these hungry people and the devastation in various countries—the press has just gone home. The PVO's have got to be there, and if the PVO's are not there, then it's up to the U.S. Government. We urge you to really speak forcefully for the people that are hungry and are dying, whether in Ethiopia or Sudan. We are urging you and that is really the reason that I am here today—to push you and urge you in these instances to be firm with these countries. I think that our constituencies would want us to push you because of the amount of money in Government aid that we are giving them.

Mr. BROWN. Sir, we take your comments and your interest most seriously. We will continue trying to influence the Government of Sudan as well as the Government of Ethiopia. We agree with you that this is a area that requires a broad range of interest in the press, in the Congress, and in others, and we appreciate the concern that has been expressed here today. This kind of hearing certainly serves a purpose in that regard.

Press coverage has diminished. There have, of course, been the recent articles in the Atlanta Constitution that you mentioned. And interestingly, the Sudan press has not forgotten the problems in the south. I think it's a reflection of the contrast between the situations in Ethiopia and Sudan—the fact that these issues are discussed openly and reported openly in the Sudan press. That in itself invites pressure on the Sudanese Government to try to correct these problems.

Mr. EMERSON. Mr. Chairman, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Ohio concerning PVO's. I personally happen to believe that the opportunities for progress are greater in the Sudan than they are in Ethiopia, given the attitudes of the respective governments. I too would encourage you to keep the pressure on in both of these places in our concern for humanitarian assistance.

I do have a number of additional questions. I will not ask them in person, but I would like to ask unanimous consent to submit them in writing so that we will have them as a matter of record for this committee. I wanted to have this hearing because I think that it is important that we continue our oversight of these tragedies and human suffering. I don't want to prolong the hearing any longer, but I would appreciate the opportunity to submit questions in writing for the record.

Mr. Chairman, thank you once again for holding this hearing.

Chairman LELAND. Without objection, so ordered. Let the Chair say too, that he appreciates the urging of the gentleman from Missouri, to have this hearing. I think it has been very helpful to us. I, too, have questions that I will submit to you gentlemen, and we will keep the record open for the purpose of entering your responses into the record.

Let me say this. The Chair may have philosophical differences with the ranking minority member and also differences on approaches in the way we try to reach our goal, which is to help hungry people wherever they are and to affect humanitarianism as a mark of our Government in whatever ways we can. Let me also say that the two of us, in fact, all of us on this committee, want to see that every man, woman, and child on the face of this Earth has an adequate diet so that they can live and become productive citizens.

We have demonstrated our interest by the many hearings that we have had over the past 4 years and by our active involvement by going to some of the places in need to observe the problems so that we can come back and channel our efforts in the Congress to get some relief for those folks.

We also appreciate the efforts of the State Department and A.I.D., although sometimes I have a hard time with some of the administration policies as I try to affect changes in the way that I want to see them. I am still a very idealistic aspiring humanitarian and I am trying to affect some substance to that idealism. I just have to continue to do what I see as necessary.

I am very happy that we are able to have this type of dialog and I think that in the long-term, we will ultimately come together and do good things. I would like to echo the sentiments of the gentleman from Missouri and associate myself with the gentleman from Ohio in his remarks about the PVO's. We do channel our interest through many of them, and it has been very effective, as we saw in 1984–85 especially.

Let me say that we really appreciate all four of you gentlemen coming here today to help us understand the situation better.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the hearing follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BILL EMERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

I would like to thank the Chairman for holding this hearing on the extremely serious hunger problems in Ethiopia and Sudan. The Committee has devoted considerable attention to these two countries in the past, but given recent developments and the gravity of the situation, it is entirely appropriate that we once again examine the famine and suffering that grip the Ethiopian and Sudanese people.

On March 10 of this year the Committee held a hearing on hunger in Africa, including Ethiopia and Sudan. It was clear from that hearing that, while drought played a role in the emergencies, the main cause of hunger was war. We have learned many lessons about how to deal with natural disasters, but man-made famines present a much different challenge. The cruelty and indifference that cause the suffering can also block efforts to help the innocent victims.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Ethiopia. Just as relief agencies were preparing one of the most comprehensive responses in history to the famine in the northern provinces, the Ethiopian government expelled almost all Western relief workers from the war-torn provinces of Eritrea and Tigray. The Mengistu government has also expelled the International Committee of the Red Cross from the entire country. To my knowledge, the last regime to take similar action was the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia before that murderous group killed one-third of the population.

The cynical and ruthless action of the Mengistu regime could

condemn over one million people to starvation in the near future. It is a clear attempt to use food as a weapon against civilians caught in a civil war. I cannot avoid the conclusion that the Ethiopian government, having failed to achieve a military victory, is now prepared to use starvation as an instrument of state policy.

This brutality should be condemned by all civilized people. Those who support the Ethiopian government, especially the Soviet Union and Cuba, also stand accused of aiding and abetting this crime against humanity.

Turning briefly to Sudan, the civil war in the South is producing a flood of refugees, many in very poor condition. I will be interested in hearing from our witnesses what is being done to alleviate the suffering, both in the short term by way of emergency assistance and in the long term in the form of an end to the war.

I would also like to hear from our witnesses their assessment of the difference between the situation in Ethiopia and Sudan. There have been criticisms that the United States has not responded equally to each emergency. I suspect that this is because the circumstances are not the same in each case, and I look forward to hearing more on this subject.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I understand that at the March 10 hearing the Administration witnesses came under some vigorous questioning about the adequacy of our relief operation in Ethiopia, especially regarding the number of trucks available for transporting food. I believe that subsequent events have vindicated the judgment of AID on this issue. Perhaps there is a lesson here that Congress, in its oversight responsibilities, should avoid the temptation to

micro-manage foreign policy.

I travelled to Ethiopia during the last famine and witnessed the tremendous job that AID and the private voluntary groups were doing there. In some ways they have an even more difficult task ahead of them this time. They deserve our support, and I look forward to hearing their testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KWEISI MFUME, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN, FOR BOTH YOUR LEADERSHIP AND FOR CALLING THIS PARTICULAR HEARING TODAY. I WOULD LIKE TO ALSO WELCOME OUR DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF WITNESSES WHO HAVE COME TO ADDRESS THE CRISIS IN ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN.

I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT DESPITE EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY MANY IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, WE MUST ONCE AGAIN COME TOGETHER AND ASK OURSELVES WHY OUR EFFORTS HAVE FAILED TO ALLEVIATE THE WAR AND FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN? AND EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, COMES THE QUESTION-- TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THIS

ADMINISTRATION PURSUED SOLUTIONS TO ENDING BOTH OF THESE HUMAN TRAGEDIES?

MR. CHAIRMAN, I AM PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT UNLESS A CHANGE IN POLICY HERE IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD OCCURS, WE MAY WITNESS MILLIONS OF TRAGIC DEATHS IN THE COMING DECADE. TODAY, WE ARE SEEING THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE GREATLY HAMPERING EFFORTS BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SEEKING TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO THOSE WHO ARE ON THE VERGE OF STARVATION. I AM ABSOLUTELY APPALLED BY REPORTS THAT FOOD IS USED AS A "WEAPON" TO COERCE AND INTIMIDATE INNOCENT CIVILIANS. THE POLICY OF USING HUNGER AND STARVATION AS A MEANS FOR ACHIEVING MILITARY ENDS MUST BE HALTED.

IN ETHIOPIA, AN ESTIMATED 7 MILLION PEOPLE ARE AT RISK OF STARVATION. FOOD PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BY ARMED CONFLICTS. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN HAVE DIED BECAUSE OF WAR-RELATED CAUSES. DESPITE THE SMALL GAINS MADE BY INTERNATIONAL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS, THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ORDERED RELIEF WORKERS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

IN SUDAN, THE SITUATION IS JUST AS BLEAK. EFFORTS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE IN THE SOUTHERN REGION HAVE BEEN THWARTED. ALTHOUGH THIS REGION IS FERTILE AND COULD ADEQUATELY PRODUCE ENOUGH FOOD, AN

ESTIMATED 2.8 MILLION PEOPLE ARE AT RISK OF STARVATION. THE POLICIES OF THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT ARE IN NO WAY PROVIDING RELIEF TO MANY FAMINE VICTIMS IN AREAS OUTSIDE OF ITS IMMEDIATE CONTROL.

THE AVAILABILITY OF FOOD IS NOT THE PROBLEM. THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER DONOR NATIONS HAVE SENT MILLIONS OF TONS OF FOOD AID TO THESE COUNTRIES. BUT THE ONGOING CONFLICTS HAVE CONTINUED TO DAMPEN THIS EFFORT. MILITARY ARMS AND WEAPONS FLOW FREELY INTO BOTH NATIONS WHILE FOOD AID AWAITS DISTRIBUTION AT THE HARBORS. IT IS TIME THAT WE TURN THESE "SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES" TO FEED THOSE SUFFERING MOST AND END THE ESCALATION OF WAR IN ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN.

DURING THE COURSE OF THIS HEARING, I WILL BE MOST INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS DOING TO INSPIRE A SHIFT IN AGRICULTURAL AND LOGISTICAL POLICIES TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE AT RISK OF STARVATION. I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM OUR WITNESSES HERE TODAY.

FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA: BACKGROUND STATISTICS

In 1987, Ethiopia was struck with drought for the second time this decade. The drought was most severe in the northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigray where 75 - 100 percent of the harvest was lost. The Ethiopian government and the international community responded quickly and substantially to avert the formation of camps and the massive illness, starvation and death that characterized the 1984-85 famine in Ethiopia.

However, as a result of intensified conflict between the government and the Eritrean and Tigrayan liberation movements, emergency relief operations were crippled. In April, 1988, the Ethiopian government expelled all foreign relief workers from Tigray and Eritrea, making food distribution and need assessment almost impossible. Relief trucks were commandeered by the government and planes were grounded. The civilian population in the north is now dependent upon relief supplies which are sent in from Sudan by Western donors.

STATISTICS

Area: 471,799 square miles
Population: 48.3 million

Total population in need: 7 million
In Eritrea and Tigray: 3.2 million -- possibly one million not receiving food assistance

Food aid requirements: 1.3 million metric tons
International pledges: 1.5 million metric tons

U.S. Government contribution:
Food (in tons): 272,566
Food (in dollars): $97,635,200
Disaster assistance: $19,111,630
Total: $116,746,830

Infant mortality rate: 118 per 1,000 live births
Life expectancy: 50 years

FAMINE IN SUDAN: BACKGROUND STATISTICS

There are two areas in Sudan in which people are facing food shortages. In western Sudan, the provinces of Northern Darfur and Northern Kordofan have been experiencing a drought since the end of October, 1987 which has resulted in large crop failures. However, due to the prepositioning of food stocks in the provinces, widespread hunger has been averted.

The other region facing food shortages is southern Sudan, and there the situation is critical. The famine in the south is man-made. Civil war has virtually terminated food production, and the government and the rebel army, the SPLA, have effectively cut off millions of people from food relief. The government will not aid most citizens in the south because of its fears that food will be seized by the SPLA to feed its forces. The SPLA, in turn, has attacked food convoys, barges and aircraft claiming that it cannot distinguish between military and relief convoys.

STATISTICS

Area: 967,494 square miles, Africa's largest country
Population: Approximately 24 million

Total population in need: 3.45 million
- West: 1,750,000
- South: 700,000
- Khartoum: 1,000,000

Total displaced population: 1.3 million in south and in Khartoum

Food aid requirements: 194,000 metric tons
U.S.G. emergency assistance: $9,631,726

Infant mortality rate: 103 per 1,000 live births
Life expectancy: 52 years

Religion
- Sunni Moslems: 73 percent
- Animist: 18 percent
- Christians: 9 percent

U.S.G. Bilateral Aid to Sudan (in thousands of dollars)

	Development Assistance	ESF	PL 480	Military	Total
FY 86	30,988	10,600	50,046	17,033	108,667
FY 87	20,407	---	55,266	5,990	81,663
FY 88*	15,000	14,350	43,054	900	73,304
FY 89*	15,000	12,000	41,476	6,000	74,476

* FY 88 figures are estimates. FY 89 figures are Admin. request.

ETHIOPIA
FACT SHEET

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ETHIOPIA'S CURRENT FOOD EMERGENCY

DROUGHT: In 1984-85 a serious drought in Ethiopia caused the deaths of several hundred thousand people, perhaps as many as one million. The international community responded with the delivery of massive quantities of food aid and other disaster relief. In 1985-86 the food situation improved with the return of the rains. The crop yield in 1985 was one third larger than in 1984 and the crop yield in 1986 was larger still, although food production has remained below its pre-drought levels. In 1987 drought struck once again and the threat of famine was renewed. The drought is most severe in the northernmost provinces of Eritrea and Tigray. Drought destroyed virtually 100 percent of the harvest in Eritrea and perhaps seventy-five percent in Tigray.

ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURAL POLICIES: In addition to drought, the Ethiopian government's agricultural policies further aggravate the food production problems of the country. Even if the rains had been normal, U.S. and U.N. agricultural experts estimate that the country would have needed 500,000 tons of food aid for the current crop year. It is now estimated that by the early 1990's, Ethiopia will have an annual structural deficit of cereal grains in excess of two million tons. Policies and programs affecting agricultural production include:

Villagization, the conglomeration of numerous small villages into larger ones in order to increase political control and in preparation for the collectivization of agriculture. State farms absorb 40% of the Ethiopian government's development expenditures but contribute only 4-5% of total crop production. Continuation of villagization and state farming with low yields will certainly bring about further declines in crop production and greater dependence on imported food commodities. The government's closest ally, the Soviet Union, has joined the World Bank, United Nations and European Economic Community development experts in urging radical changes in Ethiopia's agricultural policies. The implementation of agricultural reform, however, is proving to be extremely slow.

Low market pricing by the government. The Ethiopian government has traditionally disfavored peasant farmers even though the peasants are responsible for 90% of all crop production. The government has set the market prices for farm commodities so low that private farmers make a marginal profit at best and have little incentive to grow more than what is needed for sustinance.

CIVIL WAR: Military conflict has wracked the northern province of Eritrea since 1962 when Ethiopia annexed the former Italian colony. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has led the insurrection against the government in what is now the oldest civil war in the world. Since last December, the EPLF has made major gains in the struggle, now controlling perhaps 85% of the Eritrean territory. In the province of Tigray, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has been fighting the central government since the mid-1970's for provincial autonomy and a change of government in Addis Ababa. Civil strife in these regions has disrupted the lives of

millions of rural people, resulting in decreased food production and has interrupted emergency relief operations, further contributing to the food situation. Many people living in Eritrea and Tigray receive food aid through a "cross border operation", a relief operation supported by various Western donor governments and private relief agencies. Large amounts of donated food are distributed by the relief agencies affiliated with the EPLF and TPLF. The Ethiopian military has repeatedly destroyed convoys crossing the border, convoys carrying food for the civilian population of Tigray and Eritrea.

EXPULSION OF RELIEF WORKERS: In April, 1988, the Ethiopian government expelled all foreign relief workers from Tigray and Eritrea provinces. According to the government, this measure was taken to protect the safety of the expatriate relief officials, an act necessitated by the activities of the insurgent forces. The expulsion of these relief workers has made it nearly impossible to assess needs and organize the distribution of food.

Four hundred privately owned trucks previously used for relief work have been commandeered by the government and are being used for military purposes; planes previously used in the relief operation have been grounded.

The Ethiopian government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission is distributing food in the northern provinces only to government and party officials and their dependents, though it is allowing the limited distribution of food to the civilian population through a consortium of private relief agencies. Presumably based on a response to the military reverses suffered earlier, the policies have resulted in a disruption of critical food deliveries to the civilian populations of Tigray and Eritrea. Little food is reaching the people of Tigray and Eritrea who reside outside of government controlled areas except through the "cross border operation".

The current policies being pursued by the government have the effect of crippling the international relief operation designed to prevent the onset of famine.

There currently exists a potentially catastrophic situation in Ethiopia. Continuation of the drought, detrimental government agricultural policies and the suspension of effective food relief could trigger a famine not unlike the famine of 1984-85 which could claim the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian people. Without the reversal of current policies, Ethiopia may endure incredible suffering. The primary question is how the U.S. and the international community can most effectively work around the political and other barriers in place which preclude effective relief assistance for those in great need.

THE SUDAN
FACT SHEET

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUDAN'S CURRENT FOOD EMERGENCY

SUDANESE POLITICAL SITUATION: Seventy percent of the Sudanese population are Sunni Moslems, who live mostly in the north. The south of the country is populated by pagans (20%) and Christians (5%). The Sudanese government is run by an unstable coalition of elected political parties. A civil war has raged since 1983 between the Sudanese Army and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a Christian-oriented rebel group predominantly made up of members of the Dinka tribe. The SPLA is fighting for the repeal of the Shari'a laws (traditional Islamic laws) and for regional autonomy. In 1983, President Jaafar Nimeiri, who was later overthrown, decreed a national return to Shari'a. The return to Shari'a revoked a previous agreement which had left the south autonomous. In addition to the civil war, there are also countless squirmishes in the south between anti-Dinka tribal militias armed by the government and the SPLA. Fighting has disrupted production and promoted massive population displacement. Countless innocent civilians have been victimized by the rebel groups and government militias which destroy crops, steal livestock, murder civilians, and enslave women and children. In excess of 1.3 million civilians have fled to Khartoum and several hundred thousand have trekked across the desert to Ethiopia, where they reside in makeshift refugee camps.

FAMINE AND RELIEF EFFORTS: Hundreds of thousands of people are starving in the southern provinces of Sudan. Unlike other areas of Sudan, the southern provinces are situated on fertile land and are not suffering from drought. The famine is man-made. If not for the war, the land could support the people of the south. The civil war has virtually terminated food production. Complicating the situation, the government and SPLA have effectively cut off many displaced civilians from food relief. The government will not aid these citizen because it apparently fears that food will be comandeered by the SPLA and used to feed their forces. In addition, many of the civilians in the south are Dinka, the tribe most closely associated with the rebel movement. The Sudanese government has prevented foreign relief agencies from delivering food aid to civilians in the south except in a few government garrison towns. The SPLA has no effective delivery mechanism for getting food to the civilian population. The rebel army lives largely from pillaging. The SPLA receives considerable aid from the Ethiopian government.

Currently, international relief efforts are aiding the people in the drought-stricken areas of the west and northeast and refugees who have fled north to Khartoum. The Sudanese military has delayed food convoys and has given priority on government freight trains to the transport of commodities more readily saleable on the black market. The SPLA regularly attacks convoys to government controlled-cities in the south. Relief efforts to the south by plane were suspended when the SPLA downed a civilian Sudanese airliner carrying relief on August 16, 1986.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been working with the Sudanese government and the SPLA to reach an agreement on the

resumption of food relief shipments to the south. Flights into Wau resumed the second week of July as part of what is hoped to be a broader agreement.

U.S. RESPONSE TO THE HUNGER SITUATION IN SUDAN: Sudan, strategically located on the southern flank of the Middle East, has close ties to the West and good relations with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, both crucial U.S. allies in the vicinity. For many years Sudan was the largest recipient of U.S. aid in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The U.S. Government has been very vocal in condemning various acts by the Ethiopian government which hinder relief operations but far more reluctant to criticize the Sudanese authorities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH L. BROWN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to meet with you to share information about the twin tragedies of war and famine that afflict Ethiopia and Sudan. We judge the situations in both nations to be severe; furthermore both risk further deterioration during the next few months. Thus both merit strong continued effort toward remedy. Whereas there are some striking parallels in the two cases, there are some significant differences. One of the parallels is that in each case the United States government has been active in seeking realistic and practical solutions to the immediate constraints posed to the movement of food. We have used influence, moral suasion, public statements, and private contacts. We have engaged in active diplomatic dialogue, confronted government officials, prodded other donors, and international organizations and exhorted neighbors as well as host governments toward the fullest possible implementation of the goal of feeding hungry people. Similarly, we have encouraged political solutions to the conflicts which have given rise to these human calamities. The twin objectives of feeding the people and stopping the wars do go hand in hand, but hungry people can't wait. They must eat. So our primary objective has been to devise ways and mechanisms to move and distribute food.

Let's look first at Ethiopia where the famine situation remains precarious. At present of the approximately 3.2 million people at risk in the two northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigray, we estimate that approximately 850,000 people are being fed from the government side, and approximately 1.2-1.5 million by rebel relief agencies. We estimate 0.85 to 1.15 million people are not being reached by Government or other relief agencies and we anticipate that these people will move towards food in the months to come.

Indigenous relief organizations, including the Joint Relief Partnership which is associated with Catholic Relief Services, expanded their distribution networks in Eritrea and Tigray following the expulsion of foreign relief workers last April 6, but are not allowed to distribute food outside government held territory. Given the reduced government control in the northern provinces on account of the war, many hundreds of thousands of people who were formerly served from government controlled towns no longer receive food. This situation may be changing again, however, with the late June return of portions of Tigray to government control. We understand that the principal north-south road through Tigray is back in government hands. If so, this should permit food distribution centers in key towns like Wukro and Adigrat to re-open.

In mid-June, the government permitted the United Nations to assign three people to northern Ethiopia to monitor distribution centers (in addition to two who manage the UN truck fleet). Other international monitors have also been permitted to return. These are small but positive steps. We are also trying to expand the UN umbrella in the north to encompass private voluntary organizations.

Since this emergency began in August 1987, the United States has provided food and other aid worth over $112 million for famine relief strictly through private voluntary organizations such as CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Lutheran World Relief and the International Committee of the Red Cross. We have not provided relief directly to the Ethiopian government, nor have we provided direct assistance to exile relief associations. The Eritrean Relief Association (ERA) and Relief Society of Tigray (REST) are affiliated, respectively, with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF), two separatist and/or Marxist organizations which we do not recognize or support. However, several private organizations do effectively coordinate on relief matters with ERA and REST. We endorse such undertakings and trust that the combined impact of public and private interest in mitigating disaster in Ethiopia will result in delivery of food to hungry people.

Assistant Secretary Chester Crocker noted in testimony before House Foreign Affairs subcommittees on April 21 that the roots of famine in the north lie as much in war as in weather. He added that humanitarian crisis will be a recurrent phenomenon as long as parties to strife are wedded to military rather than political options. The United States believes that the need for political compromise and negotiation has never been more apparent. We have repeatedly called on the parties concerned to refrain from further combat. We have urged them as well as their supporters, including the Soviet Union, to seek realistic resolution of their differences. We remain committed to that approach, even though until the parties themselves are prepared to negotiate, outsiders such as ourselves or the United Nations will have little impact on the problem.

Despite the obstacles, donors cannot be complacent. Insofar as we know, the death toll from starvation, thus far, has been low. That statistic is cause for reflection that the massive feeding operations are having an impact, but also reflection that the unknowns still outweigh the knowns in the

equation. We do not know why we have not seen more mass movements of people or camp formations. We suspect it is because farm stocks of food were higher than originally estimated. But we must continue to plan for the worst. We must push ahead to clear ports, augment transportation systems, involve PVO personnel again in distribution efforts in Eritrea and Tigray, strive for "open roads, own risk", provide food to displaced persons and prepare for camps or migrations. With the support of the Congress we intend to continue to implement the mandate that the American people have conferred upon us to see that these people do not starve.

SUDAN

The situation in Sudan is analogous in that war is the primary culprit rather than weather. Also there are many unknowns. Reliable statistics from the south do not exist, but overall we estimate that one to two million people are affected. Many of those people are apparently moving. At least 280,000 are now refugees in southwestern Ethiopia. More arrive daily. Another 300,000 are displaced in and around the regional capitals in the south joining about the half a million people who live there normally. As many as a million others have moved to Khartoum or other northern areas. The remaining inhabitants of rural areas have been tossed about by the vagaries of war and depredations of soldiers, militia and bandits. Since the most stable populations are concentrated in the towns, relief efforts are initially aimed at supplying people there. Working with the government of Sudan, other donors and various private voluntary agencies over the past two and a half years, we have been engaged in an intensive effort to transport food. This combined effort registered some success in moving food by truck, rail, air and barge to victims in southern Sudan. Food flows south from Khartoum and north from Kenya and Uganda. Over the last 6 months 5,000 tons of U.S. supplied food has been moved to stricken southerners. This effort continues. As of early July this year, 7,638 tons from all donors were en route to southern destinations. As in Ethiopia, sufficient food is available, but timely delivery has been exacerbated by security constraints on both sides. Rebel forces have shot down civilian aircraft and interdicted relief convoys while abuses perpetrated by government-armed tribal militias nominally allied with Khartoum against the SPLA severely complicate existing tribal animosities. Government sensitivity to outsiders has taken a toll as have overly cautious military policies and a maddeningly inefficient transport system.

The U.S. government has repeatedly stated concern about food

and humanitarian issues in southern Sudan and, along with other donors, remains engaged with the government of Sudan in an intensive dialogue on such matters. This is in fact a key difference between the situations in Sudan and Ethiopia.Sudan's policy is not confrontational nor defensive. Too a much greater extent it cooperates and coordinates with donors. Implementation does lag behind policy and various parts of its multifaceted bureaucracy hold strongly to views that occasionally diverge from ours, but these problems are being addressed constantly. For example, we have been unhappy with delays in obtaining escorts for convoys, overflight and landing permissions, and unwarranted expulsions of private voluntary personnel. We have placed those concerns forthrightly on the table for discussion and redress. Yet we are always able to discuss these issues frankly and openly with a full range of Sudanese - technocrats, bureaucrats, military chiefs, and politicians including the Prime Minister and his inner circle of decision makers. In Sudan's open democracy, humanitarian issues regarding the south are inextricably linked to the unresolved complex political problems that sustain the war. Whereas Sudanese policy is aimed at ending the war through negotiations and at the same time meeting its humanitarian obligations towards its citizens, concrete steps have often proved difficult. Combined donor overtures to higher political authorities have helped break logjams when the joint donor/government relief coordinating body was unable to implement its decisions. Bilaterally, Ambassador Anderson has relief issues at the very top of his agenda. He and his staff address concerns at virtually every level of government on an ongoing basis.

We also have had periodic contact with officials of the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army on humanitarian issues, and have tried to develop mechanisms which would permit food flows to the region irrespective of politics or war. I am pleased to advise that a process involving the International Committee of the Red Cross now seems to be achieving some headway. Red Cross personnel are scheduled to survey conditions in government-controlled and rebel held areas in preparation for feeding operations. The program should expand as mutual confidence and operational capabilities permit. We warmly and wholeheartedly endorse arrangements that permit the needs of starving people to be ministered to. We applaud the willingness of Prime Minister Sadiq al Mahdi and his government on one hand and Colonel John Garang and the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army on the other to agree to arrangements that make this possible. The people of Sudan have deserved such consideration from their leaders for a long time. We urge that such vision be further translated into viable political discussions designed to eliminate differences and to achieve national reconciliation.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion let me reiterate the Administration's commitment to feeding hungry people in the Horn of Africa. Our record is a proud one. Our accomplishments are notable. Hundreds of thousands of people in the Horn are alive because of American humanitarian concerns. We must continue to be active. We must continue to work on problems and to reduce barriers to even more effective relief. We must continue to stretch the framework so that even better performance can be achieved. We have to recognize the limitations of what is possible as we seek to enlist rather than alienate leaders in the humanitarian quest. We will reinforce dialogue with leaders, both government and rebel in the region as we persevere to do our utmost to feed the people.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR KENNETH L. BROWN

SUBMITTED BY HON. MICKEY LELAND

Q. Mr. Brown, is it correct to assume that the Sudanese Government expelled Winston Prattley, the Secretary General's special representative for the emergency, from the country for his criticisms of the government for not allowing the U.N. to move food into the south? Should we assume that the more recent expulsions of the Western PVOs came about because of uncomfortable witnesses to the conditions and the situation in the South?

A. Winston Prattley was expelled for reasons which were not clearly stated by the Sudanese Government. However, the assumption that he was expelled for criticizing the Government for its poor performance on relief is logical, given Mr. Prattley's position and the Sudanese Government's performance on relief at that time.

The Sudanese Government did not give detailed reasons for expelling three Western PVOs last year, other than citing "national security grounds". We see the probable motivation for expulsion as Government suspicion that the three PVOs, which were operating in the South, may have been aiding the SPLA. We are confident that these suspicions were groundless and we have so advised the Sudanese Government on numerous occasions. A secondary reason for expulsion may have been an effort to prevent foreign PVOs from directly observing conditions in the South. The Sudanese Government may have believed that World Vision employees in Wau were the source of Western press stories about the atrocities there.

Q. Mr. Brown, one of the few reasons for optimism in recent weeks has been the long-anticipated launching of an International Red Cross relief operation in the South. The plan was basically to deliver food to three government-controlled cities and to three S.P.L.A.-controlled cities for hungry civilians.

Just two days ago, after the Sudanese government had overruled the objections of the military and agreed to the final elements of this plan, the Red Cross plane was forced to return to Khartoum before it ever reached its destination. Now, apparently, the plane has landed and is finally unloading food and medicine.

What now, Mr. Brown? How long do we tolerate these delays? What are you doing to make certain these planes fly and accomplish their mission?

A. We have had numerous high-level meetings with the Sudanese stressing the importance the ICRC relief effort for Southern Sudan. The Sudanese Government, which is in agreement, has ensured that all elements of the Government now take appropriate steps to support and facilitate the ICRC program. The ICRC's survey should be completed about the end of July and relief operations should commence about August 1 in the most needy areas.

Q: Mr. Brown, let me ask you about the status of the resettlement program in Ethiopia.

When resettlement resumed last year, there appeared to be reason to believe that the abuses and errors of the 1985 resettlement program were not being repeated. The program was to be more voluntary, the preparations better, the numbers of people involved quite lower. Now, other than the incident reported in February, has that more or less been the case? And has not resettlement been effectively suspended in any case because of recent events?

A. The Government of Ethiopia suspended its resettlement program in 1986 as the result of an international outcry against its abuses. The program resumed, on a much smaller scale and in a more low-key manner in November 1987. Ethiopian officials maintained that all participation would be voluntary. With the exception of the incident at Korem in February 1988, in which 20 people allegedly were killed, and an undetermined number moved against their will, we are not aware of recent instances of forced resettlement.

Probably some 10,000 people have been involved in the resettlement program since it resumed in November 1987.

Our Embassy in Addis Ababa follows this issue closely and keeps us apprised of current developments.

Q. Mr. Brown, your statement refers to the "intensive dialogue concerning humanitarian issues" we have with the Sudanese Government. This has been the Administration's phase for at least two years regarding the growing crisis in southern Sudan. What do we specifically have to show for this dialogue? Press reports, eyewitness accounts, reports from numerous church officials -- including a Catholic bishop -- document a horrendous situation in the country. Just how is this intensive dialogue working?

A. We have frequent high-level meetings with Sudanese Government officials. Humanitarian issues have been important items on our agenda in nearly all of these meetings. The issues we raise include providing humanitarian relief to the war victims in the South, accomodating displaced persons and refugees, and preventing and investigating human rights violations. Sudan's record has been good on accomodating refugees and the Government is now taking steps to seriously address the issue of displaced persons. As Mr. Bollinger has addressed in some detail, the Government has assisted in moving a substantial amount of relief to the South, although clearly the distribution pipeline needs to be greatly expanded. Implementation of the ICRC program has been an important part of our dialogue with the Sudanese on relief issues.

We have been less successful in our discussions about reports of human rights violations, although we frequently raise such issues. There are several basic problems. Most of the violations take place in areas outside of the central government's control. In some areas under nominal government control, local authorities fail to follow central government directives or policies. We have encouraged the Government to investigate stories of violations when they surface. The Government has conducted some investigations, but they have been perfunctory. One positive step the Government has recently taken is replacing the military commander of Wau after he was portrayed in several Western press articles as the perpetrator of atrocities there.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WALTER G. BOLLINGER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (U.S. A.I.D.)

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am pleased to have this opportunity to appear before The Committee to update you on the United States Government's role in the international relief programs currently underway in Sudan and Ethiopia.

The situation today in Sudan and Ethiopia is quite serious. Several million people continue to be at risk, and there are substantial obstacles in the way of providing them with timely assistance. The United States, in concert with the rest of the international donor community, continues to provide a substantial share of relief assistance and continues to press both governments to pay greater attention to the needs of their people. While large numbers of people in both countries are suffering greatly, conditions in each country are different. Our response, therefore, is tailored to each country's needs.

My colleague, Mr. Brown, has already addressed the political situation in the two countries and the obstacles political issues can place in the way of humanitarian relief. I will discuss the emergency relief programs and the steps taken by the United States to achieve effective distribution of our assistance on a timely basis.

The emergency humanitarian relief objectives of this Administration, and its predecessors, have been consistent:

-- to identify people-at-risk of famine and other life-threatening situations, wherever these people may be;

-- to understand what assistance the host country will provide, and then, in concert with the other donors, respond in an appropriate fashion;

-- to monitor and evaluate the distribution of our assistance during and after implementation of the programs; and

-- to deal successfully with bottlenecks that arise so often during implementation of relief programs.

There are a number of sub-objectives which flow from these

emergency and humanitarian objectives, including:

-- greater host country and donor awareness of the factors which cause the problems - our Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) project is a good example of an effort in this area;

-- development and institutionalization of host country monitoring and identification capabilities; and

-- improved African response capability, both governmental and non-governmental.

Our emergency and humanitarian relief programs are also implemented, when possible, hand in glove with bilateral and regional development programs. For example, in Sudan, our bilateral development activities include a project with the Government of Sudan to improve its crop and agricultural production forecasting capability. Clearly, the more effective this project is the better able the government, and donors, will be in knowing early how to plan for production shortfalls.

SUDAN

The largest country in Africa, as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River, Sudan now has four separate emergencies, with an estimated 3.5 million people in need:

-- 1.75 million people affected by food shortages caused by drought in the west;

-- as many as 1 million displaced persons who have fled north, mostly to Khartoum, from the civil strife in the south;

-- the 700,000 people affected by the civil strife in the south, of whom 300,000 are displaced persons in garrison towns; and

-- the 10,000 new Ethiopian refugees in the northeast since May, who have joined 650,000 previous refugees from Ethiopia.

The international donor community in Sudan has been working closely with the government on all of these crises for some time. Representatives of the government are always available to discuss relief efforts, but the pace of action in Sudan is seldom swift.

There are reasons for this slowness: the country's vast size; the lack of accurate data on conditions; the depressed state of the economy, which makes foreign exchange scarce for items such as diesel fuel; the very low level of development,

particularly in logistics; the inexperienced and thinly staffed bureaucracy and the primitive and unreliable means of communication. All of these factors contribute to the slow pace at which relief programs are implemented.

Ongoing civil strife in southern Sudan magnifies and complicates enormously the problems of implementing relief programs in that region of the country.

It is estimated there are 700,000 people affected in the south. But many of them are not accessible. The government is reduced to five or six garrison towns in the south, with the rest of the countryside - an area larger than Texas, but with fewer miles of good road than the District of Columbia - controlled by the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Little information is available about the situation in government controlled areas, and even less from SPLA territory.

The donors, working collectively with the government, have attempted for the past two years to position food and relief supplies on the perimeter of the south and have seized opportunities to deliver supplies into the south as they arise.

In 1987-88, for example, it was agreed to try to deliver about 70,000 Metric Tons (MT) of relief supplies to the south. Donors promised the food, guaranteeing to have it available for movement into the south as needed, either from northern Sudan or from countries bordering the south. In the final analysis, however, because of fighting and the logistic difficulty of penetrating the region to deliver relief goods, only slightly more than half the food was pre-positioned and only about 20,000 Metric Tons (MT) was delivered into the south in 1987. The United States approved and pre-positioned slightly more than $9.1 million of emergency relief assistance, including 32,000 MT of food, in the international efforts to help in the south in 1987.

This year the donors (including the United States) tried to provide food from the north, in river convoys organized by the United Nations and the Government of Sudan. But the barge convoys were delayed several times and, when they finally got underway the crews suffered heavy loss of life running the Nile from Kosti to Juba, as a result of attacks from the shore by the SPLA. The record for donor truck and railway convoys, is almost equally disappointing: several hundred tons at a time, and very few convoys at that. As the rainy season progresses, it will be virtually impossible to move food from the railheads because the roads become impassable.

Since 1987 donors have tried also to provide food from the south, through Uganda, Kenya and Zaire. The United States swapped grain with Kenya, and an American private voluntary organization (PVO) moved the grain from Kenya through Uganda and Zaire into southwestern Sudan. But the route was long and tortuous. Bridges collapsed or were not repaired. It was again very frustrating trying to help, but only being able to deliver a few thousand tons.

Donors (including the United States) airlifted food into the south, sometimes from northern Sudan, and sometimes from Kenya and Uganda. That seemed to be the most reliable way, but it was always fraught with danger because of bellicose threats and the ability of the SPLA to bring down aircraft with ground to air missiles. It is also exceedingly expensive.

Although the situation in the south remains exceedingly difficult, it is now a little more possible to reach the people at risk. This is because more than one million people have left the war zone in the south and are now more accessible, whether inside Sudan as displaced persons or in southwestern Ethiopia as refugees. This latter group now contains an estimated 280,000 Sudanese. It is easier to reach both groups now.

In addition, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is working out an arrangement with the Government of Sudan and the SPLA to permit parallel assessment of the conditions in three towns on each side of the lines in the south. It is hoped fervently that these assessments will lead soon to ICRC-implemented emergency relief programs. The United States would support such programs wholeheartedly.

The problems in carrying out relief programs in southern Sudan, therefore, have been due in large part to the inability of the government to control sufficient territory to permit distributions, the unwillingness of the SPLA to permit neutral humanitarian relief programs in areas it controls, the extraordinarily fragile nature of the logistics network and the exceedingly long lines of supply. Further complications are the lack of hard information about the numbers of people at risk and where they are located. It is a very vexing problem, but one which the donors are working continually to improve, with the cooperation and support of the Government of Sudan.

ETHIOPIA

Like Sudan, there are currently four different emergency and humanitarian relief problems in Ethiopia:

-- the 3 to 4 million people in need of food in southern Ethiopia;

-- the 280,000 southern Sudanese refugees in abysmal condition who have fled to southwestern Ethiopia;

-- the reported 45,000 new refugees just arrived who have fled the fighting in northern Somalia, and have joined 10,000 previous refugees in eastern Ethiopia; and

-- the approximately 3.2 million Ethiopians at risk in the war zones of northern Ethiopia.

While there are problems in implementation of the first three programs listed above, they are being resolved and the programs are being implemented relatively smoothly. It is the program in northern Ethiopia that has created the greatest problems for donors concerned about Ethiopians at risk.

While the people at risk in southern Sudan occupy an area larger than Texas, those at risk in the several regions of Ethiopia are closer together and more accessible. From a logistics standpoint, almost everything is better in Ethiopia than in Sudan, but it is still difficult at best to deliver relief and there are five times as many people-at-risk in northern Ethiopia as there are in southern Sudan. The Ethiopian government is more capable and experienced, albeit less cooperative, the food handling and logistics system is better, there are more and better roads, the people are more accessible and not as dispersed although the population density and numbers at risk are greater, and there are more donors with much greater experience working on emergency relief programs.

In Ethiopia, the donors work collectively, under the leadership of the United Nations, with the government of Ethiopia, to provide effective and timely relief. The attitude of the Government of Ethiopia, particularly in relation to the United States, is not as forthcoming and cooperative as it could be.

Nevertheless, the donors in Ethiopia have made their collective position abundantly clear: it is absolutely necessary that the Government of Ethiopia provide humanitarian assistance to non-combatant civilian Ethiopians in need, no matter where they may be located in country. This encompasses the concept of "open roads and own risk" in the north.

The physical condition of the 3.2 million people who we estimate to be at risk in northern Ethiopia appears to be

somewhat better than in southern Sudan at the moment. This appears to be due, in part, to the effectiveness with which the rebel relief groups implement their own relief programs.

While the logistics in southern Sudan are minimal, they are better in northern Ethiopia, and people in need are more accessible by plane, truck or pack animal, except during periods of fighting.

Working together, and in spite of the fighting and the difficult working relationship with the Government of Ethiopia, it was possible, until April 1988, to provide a patchwork series of relief programs that appeared to meet the needs of people in areas controlled by the government and also provided assistance to some in contested areas. Since there was also relief being provided by the humanitarian branches of the rebel organizations, it appeared that almost all people in need in the north were being reached.

Approximately 40 percent of the U.S. FY 1988 emergency program in Ethiopia, or $46 million, was targeted on relief programs in northern Ethiopia implemented through PVOs and the ICRC and for the 3.2 million people at risk there.

With the expulsion of foreign relief workers from northern Ethiopia on April 6, 1988, however, and contraction of relief programs to areas controlled by the government only, doubts have been raised about the ability of the remaining groups (indigenous PVOs and the Ethiopian government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission) to provide adequately monitored relief assistance to the people in need, particularly those who are located in areas beyond Government control.

The United States and other donors are concerned that some people will not be reached with assistance and that these people will begin to move from their home areas in order to find food. It is our belief that relief aid should be provided to these people to keep them in their homes so that they can prepare and cultivate the land for the harvest later this year.

The United States believes the Government of Ethiopia should do its utmost to ensure relief aid is distributed to all people in need in northern Ethiopia, now and in the future, and that it should provide more of its resources to bring this about. In addition, in order to permit equitable distribution of assistance, it is important that additional foreign relief workers be allowed to return to the north, particularly those willing to carry out distribution in contested areas. Although the some UN and selected expatriates have been allowed to

return to the north, it is important that expatriate relief personnel be allowed once again to monitor independently the situation and the distribution of relief commodities.

Only through permitting programs of this sort will it be possible to ensure there is no mass movement of displaced people in the period ahead. Only by encouraging such programs will we be able to have a chance of staving off the type of situation that has evolved in southern Sudan.

In conclusion, our emergency and humanitarian relief objectives have been consistent in Ethiopia, Sudan and throughout Africa. We endeavor to understand as much as we can about the needs in each area, to know what the government can and will supply, and then design, in consultation with other donors, an appropriate response from the U. S. Government.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR WALTER G. BOLLINGER

SUBMITTED BY HON. MICKEY LELAND

SUDAN -- MOVEMENT OF FOOD TO THE SOUTH

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Roy Stacy told this Committee that the Sudanese authorities "have assured us that an even greater effort will be made to secure timely movements" of food to the south. What are the results of these greater efforts? How much more food is moving south?

A.I.D.'s recent situation reports indicate that there has been a 75 percent increase in the flow of refugees from southern Sudan into Ethiopia. This would tend to indicate, among other things, that the increase in food shipments has been modest at best. What are we seeing in terms of food movement into southern Sudan?

Answer: Since Mr. Stacy addressed this Committee, there has been an increase in the amounts of food reaching the south. Our reports from Khartoum indicate that over 2,000 tons are moving into southern Sudan via routes from Kenya and Uganda. In addition, a total of 4,000 tons of maize and beans provided by the United States Government is being sent from Kenya to the Juba/Yei area in Equatoria province; of this 2,500 tons has already arrived and the balance is on the way. Pre-positioned food stocks continue to be available for use as the opportunity arises. Unfortunately, the increase is not as much as we would like to see, given the increased refugee flow into Ethiopia. The Sudanese government and their guerrilla opponents have permitted the ICRC

to undertake an assessment of the situation in the south. We expect the ICRC will shortly be able to implement relief activities to meet the needs it is identifying now.

SUDAN -- POTENTIAL FOR MISUSE OF FOOD AID

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, could you tell us how you assure that at the least no U.S. Government food assistance is misused in this kind of environment? You and your colleagues are, rightfully, very concerned about the misuse of our food aid in Ethiopia....and in Angola. How do you monitor the food going into the south of the Sudan?

Answer: We work diligently and spare no reasonable effort to assure that relief supplies reach intended beneficiaries. In Sudan, as in other emergency situations in Africa, we work closely with the government and non-governmental organizations to establish monitoring systems to track the food from the port of entry to the ultimate beneficiaries. Unfortunately, the insecurity that prevails in southern Sudan prevents us from maintaining the high levels of monitoring we would want. As you may remember, we raised this issue with you and other concerned Members in April 1987. In our letter to you at that time, and in subsequent staff briefings, we detailed the limits on effective monitoring in southern Sudan. To the

extent possible, we program our assistance in southern Sudan in coordination with other donors and the Relief and Rehabilitation Committee of the GOS through indigenous non-governmental programs such as Combined Agencies for Relief and Transportation (CART). Generally, we believe that the limited quantities of food which are reaching the south are effectively used. There have been reports of relief supplies being diverted before delivery to implementing agencies. The Government of Sudan has assured us that they are investigating these allegations and that it is not their policy to condone such actions.

SUDAN -- "OPEN ROADS/OWN RISK" POLICY

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, one of the keys to successful relief operations in the contested areas of northern Ethiopia was, in the 1984/85 crisis and, until recent developments, in the current one, the "open roads/own risk policy" which allowed the PVOs to transport relief assistance without military escort. Neither the government nor the SPLA has agreed to "open road/own risk" in the Sudan. What are you doing to put the policy in place? Why has the government refused to allow this?

Answer: Unlike in northern Ethiopia, the rebel group in southern Sudan has not publicly supported an open roads/own risk policy. It would be considerably more difficult to implement such a policy in Sudan, as opposed to Ethiopia, because the SPLA does not control the road network in southern Sudan. There are a number of armed groups not under SPLA control who can and do attack civilian traffic. As you may recall, the SPLA has consistently interfered with independent relief activities of legitimate organizations such as the United Nations. The Sudanese Government, on the other hand, has approved the provision of relief supplies to the south. We continue to encourage both sides of the conflict to permit relief supplies to move without interference. A recent agreement will allow the ICRC to assist on both sides of the conflict. This is a positive indication that we and the other donors may be having some success in these efforts.

ETHIOPIA -- REFUGEE MOVEMENTS

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, the death toll from the food emergency in Ethiopia appears to be relatively small to date, although the potential for catastrophe remains high. How do you explain the resilience of the Ethiopian people? How do you explain the migration of so many people into Ethiopia from the Sudan and now Somalia when we were expecting hundreds of thousands to go the other way?

Answer: The resilience of the people of northern Ethiopia has been remarkable. A team from Leeds University has made a recent study on the spot; their findings note that (1) the population includes many nomads, who live by trading their animals and animal products across the border; (2) after the last famine, local farmers made sure to fill their barns in 1986; and (3) the population of the area may actually be smaller than had been assumed when the donors computed how far the harvest would stretch. The guerrillas also report they have been able to bring more food over the border than had been estimated earlier. As a result, people have not yet been forced to move out of Ethiopia in search of food.

However, the refugees fleeing into Ethiopia from Sudan and Somalia are war victims. The fighting in Sudan involves different ethnic groups and whole societies. In Somalia, too, the violence has hit whole cities and towns. Civilians have been caught in the crossfire. All are fleeing the immediate violence of war.

ETHIOPIA -- ORPHAN PROGRAMS

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, tell me a little about the programs to assist orphans and abandoned children in Ethiopia. That is of particular interest to me. Is O.F.D.A. getting some assistance to those orphans in Gondar that I visited last year? Do you have sufficient funding for this program?

Answer: A.I.D. funds are being used to address the needs of several groups of orphans, including those in the large orphanage in Gondar. These latter are receiving direct support (training, equipment, and food aid, amounting to $52,544). Our priority effort ($312,000) is to reunite orphans either with their natural parents or with relatives who can give them an adoptive home. The "street children" in Addis Ababa -- some orphans, some deserted children or runaways -- are the object of a rehabilitation project ($75,000) which may be expanded if it is a success.

OFDA is also in the process of funding four additional orphan projects: the Blue Nile Children's Farm ($50,000); the Reppi Children's Home ($20,000); the Debre Berhan Children's Home ($10,500); and, most recently, the Consolata Fathers Assela Orphans Program ($13,250).

We have sufficient funds for these programs.

SUDAN -- FAMINE CONCERNS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, the Atlanta Journal and Constitution reports that "some relief experts say they are haunted by the thought that the starvation in southern Sudan may kill hundreds of thousands of people and uproot millions before the world notices what is happening." Are you and your A.I.D. colleagues haunted by the same fears, Mr. Bollinger?

Answer: As underscored by my testimony, we are very concerned about the grave situation in southern Sudan. We are making every effort we can to alleviate the suffering in the south. I am heartened by preliminary indications from ICRC surveys in the south which indicate that the on the ground malnutrition situation in SPLA-held territory in the south may be less severe than we thought. However, there are likely to be many people in need of assistance who are beyond the reach of the current surveys and the situation in several government-held towns is grim.

ETHIOPIA -- GUERRILLA RELIEF AGENCIES

Mr. Leland: Mr. Bollinger, what is your understanding of the relief agencies affiliated with the E.P.L.F. and the T.P.L.F. -- in terms of efficiency, capacity, integrity? Is the donated food being supplied to them reaching the civilians in need?

Answer: We understand their capacity is modest -- they are faced with carrying food by truck over a route including sand desert, rivers, and mountains, very little of the route paved. With such handicaps, they cannot feed the total needy population of Eritrea and Tigray by their own efforts. As for integrity, we have no evidence that food donated to them does not reach the civilians for whom it is intended in an efficient manner.

Mr. Leland: Would it not be prudent of the international donor community to fairly dramatically increase the flow of relief assistance going through these organizations? How much more food and other relief could they manage?

Answer: For several reasons, we believe it would be imprudent for the donor community to dramatically escalate the flow of food assistance through the relief agencies of the guerrilla movements dramatically. They are confronted by very difficult terrain and limited logistical capability. Increasing the flow of assistance over their routes would be disproportionately expensive if it could be done at all.

SUBMITTED BY HON. BILL EMERSON

ETHIOPIA -- FUTURE PROSPECTS

Mr. Emerson: What is the forecast for future growing conditions and harvests in Ethiopia? Is there any prospect of this famine ending? Have locusts affected crops in Ethiopia as they have in other regions of Africa?

Answer: Our projections are that the Ethiopian Government's agricultural policy is so discouraging to small farmers that their production per unit land area will continue to fall whatever the growing conditions, and that this "structural deficit" will reach about 2,000,000 metric tons by the early 1990's. Thus there is a continuing prospect of a food shortage -- though perhaps not strictly a "famine" -- unless Ethiopian government agricultural policies are sharply reformed.

There was a locust outbreak in Ethiopia in 1986-87. Ironically, it was frustrated by the current drought: without adequate rain, the locusts stopped hatching. New swarms coming from the west have recently been reported in Eritrea; we cannot yet say whether it will be possible to bring this threat under control while military operations are also going on.

Q. What is the military situation in Eritrea and Tigray, and how will this affect the famine? What is the level of Soviet military support for the Mengistu regime?

A. Intermittent fighting continues in Tigray and Eritrea. In mid-June, the Ethiopian army recaptured most of the Tigraen towns they had evacuated or been driven out of in April. We receive unconfirmed reports of occasional fierce fighting in Eritrea, but we are not aware of a major Ethiopian army counteroffensive against the insurgents.

Since April, when foreign relief workers were told to leave northern Ethiopia, government and indigenous relief organizations have distributed relief in Eritrea and Tigray. These organizations, confined to distribute relief food only in Government-held territory, reach about 850,000 people. We believe rebel relief organizations reach approximately 1-1.2 million people. Unfortunately, this leaves 0.8 to 1.2 million people outside all distribution systems.

Since the Government recaptured towns in Tigray in June, Government relief organizations have not been able to extend relief services to that area. Since the rebels generally control the rural areas, we assume that rebel relief organizations are still operative in Tigray. We have no indications of mass starvation or mass movements of people in search of food.

While we lack accurate figures, we estimate that the Soviet Union has provided the Government of Ethiopia with $4 - 6 billion of military assistance since 1978.

ETHIOPIA -- CONTINUATION OF AID

Mr. Emerson: The United States has already sent millions of dollars in aid to Ethiopia, with no improvement in sight. Should the United States continue to spend American tax dollars in a country that refuses to take action to help itself? Is it fair to other developing countries, who are adopting painful economic policy reforms, for the United States to continue to bail out a country such as Ethiopia which refuses to reform?

Answer: Our feeling is that to let the Ethiopian people as a whole suffer for the errors of the Ethiopian government would be a tragedy. As long as independent non-governmental organizations are active and allowed to provide relief directly to the people, we will continue to respond to emergency humanitarian needs in Ethiopia as our resources permit. We do not provide assistance directly to the Ethiopian government.

SUDAN -- PVOS AND THE RELIEF EFFORT IN THE SOUTH

Mr. Emerson: Several months ago the Sudanese Government expelled some relief agencies from the country. Why was this done, and what effect did it have on relief efforts?

Answer: Three PVOs (ACROSS, Lutheran World Relief, and World Vision) were expelled from Sudan some months ago. These organizations were working in southern Sudan on relief activities. They provided an independent source of information on the situation in the south and contributed greatly to the alleviation of suffering. We were discouraged by the decision of the Government of Sudan to expel these organizations, and have lodged strong protests. To date, the Government has not provided us with a satisfactory explanation for its action. We have continued to raise this issue in the hopes that the Government will reconsider. Fortunately, indigenous voluntary agencies affiliated with the expelled organizations have continued to work in the area and have been able to maintain services to a great extent.

SUDAN -- RESUMPTION OF ICRC OPERATIONS

Mr. Emerson: There are reports that the International Committee of the Red Cross is resuming operations in southern Sudan. What additional information can you give us on this, and what inferences can be drawn on the prospect for more humanitarian relief reaching the South?

Answer: The ICRC has resumed operations in Sudan. It has undertaken a survey of conditions in a number of towns held by the Government and the rebels. As a result of this survey, it is planning to initiate relief activities. We are heartened by the ICRC survey and will be as responsive as possible to any ICRC appeal for Sudan We will continue to encourage other donors to be responsive as well.

SUDAN -- FOOD NEEDS IN THE SOUTH

Mr. Emerson: What has the United States done to encourage the Sudanese Government to get food to people in need in the South? What has been the Sudanese reaction?

Answer: The United States has undertaken a variety of measures to encourage the Government of Sudan to facilitate and support relief efforts in the south. The Sudanese Government has consistently assured us that they share our concerns and are working to assist relief efforts. We meet with Sudanese officials at every level of the government on a regular basis and have substantive discussions on a range of issues. These representations have met with some success. The recent decision to allow the ICRC to initiate activities in the south is one example of such a success. We will continue to underline to the government how critical their support is to relief efforts in the south.

SUDAN -- RESPONSE TO SOUTHERN EMERGENCY SITUATION

Mr. Emerson: In your assessment, has the Sudanese response to the southern emergency been most affected by hostility, indifference, or inefficiency?

Answer: Sudan's response to the southern emergency has been hindered primarily by the physical limitations of Sudan's infrastructure and by coordination difficulties within the Sudanese Government. Regarding physical limitations, southern Sudan, which is the size of Texas, has fewer paved roads than the District of Columbia. It is extremely difficult to mount a relief operation in the south due to its weak transportation and communications network. On the policy side, the Government of Sudan has assured us of its concern about suffering in the south and its commitment to provide and support relief efforts. Unfortunately, in some instances government policy has been vitiated by the failure of some governmental institutions to follow central government policy. This failure is exacerbated by the difficulty of moving food to the south under wartime conditions.

Q. What are the prospects for a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Sudan? What has been the role of the United States in facilitating a resolution to the civil war? In your opinion, what are the greatest impediments to a settlement?

A. Both the Sudanese Government and the SPLA seem to agree that the war can only be resolved through a negotiated settlement. Both sides have in effect called for peace talks without preconditions. We are in contact with both sides and encouraging them to enter a dialogue and offering our good offices as a means of communication between the two sides. We hope they will meet shortly to discuss the peace process.

We have seen several kinds of impediments to a settlement over the life of this conflict -- dispositions of both sides to want to negotiate from positions of strength, the limits imposed by Ethiopia on the SPLA as well as some missed signals and simple foul-ups in the periodic contacts that have taken place in previous meetings between the two sides. Perhaps most importantly, neither side has been willing to accept what it views as preconditions for talks imposed by the other. The latter impediment has consisted in the SPLA's call for pre-emptive suspension or abandonment of Sharia law and the Northern view that Sharia should be a subject of talks rather than a precondition. We may now be at a stage where there is less focus on preconditions and more on what would be the content of talks themselves.

SUDAN -- OBSTRUCTION OF FOOD DELIVERY IN THE SOUTH

Mr. Emerson: There have been reports that both sides in the conflict have obstructed the delivery of emergency assistance to people in the South. Who are the main culprits? Are they the government-supported militias, the rebels, or the government forces?

Answer: Because of the military situation and the general insecurity, it has often been impossible to deliver food. Both sides share some of the blame. The Sudanese military have been reluctant to escort relief convoys because of fear of attack and concern that relief supplies will fall into the hands of the SPLA. In the past, the SPLA has attacked road, rail, and barge convoys carrying relief supplies, and has shot down two civilian aircraft. Hopefully, obstructions from both sides will sharply diminish now that the ICRC program is moving forward.

SUDAN -- HARVEST FORECAST AND LOCUST SITUATION

Mr. Emerson: What is the forecast for future harvests in Sudan? Has Sudan also been affected by the locust plague that has hit other African countries?

Answer: As you may know, the main harvest in Sudan is not expected until sometime this fall. Initial indications are that the rains so far have generally been satisfactory in the major crop producing areas of the country. Rains have also been adequate in the south. Unfortunately, in the last few weeks there has been a dramatic resurgence of locust swarms. This has occurred primarily in northwestern Sudan and also in northern Ethiopia adjacent to Sudan. The Government is very concerned about the problem and is working closely with the donors to take appropriate actions to mitigate potential damage from locust infestation. A.I.D. is providing technical services as well as material support for this effort.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TESFA A. SEYOUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ERITREAN RELIEF COMMITTEE, INC.

The Eritrean Relief Committee, Inc., hereafter referred to as ERC is a non-profit humanitarian agency based in New York City. We have been engaged in relief and development work since May 1976. We are members of the professional association, American Council for Voluntary International Action, or InterAction.

ERC works in partnership with a modest group of American private voluntary agencies that support humanitarian assistance programs in Eritrea.

ERC is also a grassroots organization. We have volunteer branches in 30 cities across the United States. Our volunteers are both refugees from Eritrea, like myself, and concerned Americans and other nationals. They assist in raising funds and building public awareness about relief and development needs in Eritrea.

Areas and Systems of Operation

Our areas of operation are Eritrea and the Sudan. We support two clincs and eleven schools for refugee children run by the Eritrean Relief Association (ERA) in Eastern Sudan.

In Eritrea, we work with the ERA which operates in the areas administered by the independence movement, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). The 27-year old war between Eritrea and Ethiopia has physically divided Eritrea into two parts. In many practical ways, there are two Eritreas. One is called "government-controlled". It comprises the major towns, including the capital city of Asmara and the port at Massawa. The rest of Eritrea, about 85-90% of the total 50,000 sq. ml., is variously called "EPLF controlled" territory. Roads connecting the towns with the capital city are often contested.

This divided Eritrea poses a great challenge for humanitarian work.

Although the conflict has made the news lately, the potential danger of the conflict has not been clearly presented. The Ethiopian govenment and the EPLF are at war. It is a full scale war involving hundreds of thousands of troops, complete with trenches, tanks, and MiG planes; hence, inflicting enormous human suffering.

Under the tutelage of the Soviet Union, Ethiopia's leader Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam has renewed, in recent months, his policies of "kill all, burn all", "dry the lake to kill the fish", "scorch the land", and "starve the people into submission" in Eritrea. The New York Times reported on Thursday, May 19 from Nairobi that Col. Haile Mariam's troops killed 400 civilians (mostly old people, women or children) by shooting them or crushing them with tanks in the village of She'eb, Semhar province on May 12. According to the EPLF, 600 civilians have been killed, 2,150 houses burned, 180,000 Eritrean civilians displaced since last March.

On May 14, 1988, the Ethiopian government declared a state of emergency, giving the army the warrant to shoot anybody on the spot, search private homes at any time, and arrest anybody at the army's discretion.

People who live in both Eritreas are affected by drought, and need food aid. But the majority of the Eritrean population lives in the countryside of the EPLF controlled areas. Often times combat is extremely heavy outside the major towns, preventing any migration of peasants from their villages to the towns.

Private humanitarian agencies working through Ethiopian channels had been assisting Eritreans in the towns until they were expelled from both Eritrea and Tigray by the Addis Ababa regime last May. Indeed, it is via the ports in Ethiopian-controlled parts of Eritrea that they supplied their programs in Ethiopia.

But what about the Eritreans in the countryside and those living in the towns held by the EPLF? At this time they can be reached only through an alternative channel: via cross-border operations from the Sudan. I should stress that. The great majority of drought-affected Eritreans can be assisted only via cross-border operations from the Sudan.

That's where we come in. ERC is the U.S. partner of an indigenous relief and development agency that conducts cross-border operations from the Sudan into the conflict areas of Eritrea. This agency is the ERA. ERA delivers supplies to drought and war victims across the Eritrean countryside controlled by the EPLF. ERA is the only agency that conducts cross-border operations into conflict areas of Eritrea.

I should note that the ERA is an independent, non-political humanitarian organization. It is sometimes incorrectly referred to in the press as the "relief arm of the Eritrean rebels". ERA works with the civilian departments of the EPLF as the de facto government of that part of Eritrea; but ERA is not a part of the EPLF.

ERA's cross-border operations are quite substantial. In 1985, during the peak of the 1984/85 famine, ERA fed 1.2 million people and maintained camps for 145,000. In the following years of 1986 and 1987, a total of 1.4 million beneficiaries received food from ERA. In addition to relief work, ERA supports a host of recovery and long-term development programs that lead to self sufficiency -- in water supply, agriculture, health, and education.

ERA is supported by more than 50 international humanitarian agencies from the U.S., Canada, western Europe, and Australia.

Current Food Needs

At this time of food shortage in the Horn of Africa, we speak for one million famine victims in Eritrea who are most often left out of the picture. We speak for the Eritrean civilians who are cut off from the food aid delivered through the "official" Ethiopian channels, because they live in the parts of Eritrea that are not controlled by the Ethiopian government.

Nineteen-eighty-eight food aid needs in Eritrea are quite substantial. Last summer, drought has caused over 85% of Eritrea's harvest to fail. This has affected approximately 2.3 million Eritreans in the countryside. ERA reports that one million of them are severely affected, or at risk of starvation.

I had the previledge of accompanying CBS News TV crew into the EPLF controlled territory of Eritrea last January/February where we witnessed the magnitude of drought and food distributions by the ERA.

Ibrahim Idris, a farmer with 4 children, in Erota village of western Senhit showed us around his crop field that, in normal time, would have yielded 10 quintals (enough to feed his family for at least 7 months), but said that he harvested 4 bushels of sorghum out of that field last fall. He said, "I don't have any food now and I am worried about

my kids." We heard stories of this kind time and time again from the peasants we met in the 3 provinces we covered.

ERA's emergency food aid request for 1988 calls for 217,400 metric tons of food aid, for a target population of 929,000. But confirmed pledges and deliveries of food grians from the international donor community to date amount to only 91,675 metric tons. This amount represents 42% of the total need for 1988. That compared with confirmed pledges and deliveries reaching at least 85% of total requested for the network of agencies working on the other (Ethiopia) side. Since last October 83,324 of the 91,675 tons have been received by the ERA. It is now clear that much more food will really be needed. Yet it is not clear how much of ERA's food request will be met.

During the 1984/85 famine, support for cross-border operations was proportionately low. We figure that per famine victim, cross-border operations into Eritrea received just 5% of the support that went to Ethiopia. We appeal to members of this committee, indeed, this Congress that this unfairness may not be repeated again. We believe that the intentions of the tax payers to feed all the hungry, wherever they are, should be met, and I should say that one starving human being is as deserving as the other.

The low levels of pledges combined with delays in the delivery of the pledged food have already started to hurt Eritrean peasants. According to Ghebremichael Mengistu, ERA's Field Coordinator, over 50,000 people had already left thier homes in search of food when the CBS News TV crew and I were there last February. These are people from the southern and western regions of Eritrea (including Dankalia, the eastern escarpments of Akele Guzay, upper Barka, and parts of Seraye and Hamasien) who could easily be reached by ERA's distribution if the agency had food available. Again, ERA is the only agency that conducts cross-border operations from the Sudan into the conflict areas of Eritrea.

Mr. Mengistu was expecting many more farm families to leave their villages in the following months because enough food to keep them in their homes was not available. Therefore, immediate international food donations are needed for distribution among those families subjected to displacements. We should realize that all people internally displaced in Eritrea are potential refugees for neighboring Sudan.

I would like to mention also other essential non-food needs in 1988. These are: Medical supplies worth $3,000,000.00 and additional tents, blankets, household utencils, sanitation items (like soap) for the temporary camps in which some drought and war victims will use.

ERA has also requested $7,120,000.00 for the provision of agricultural implements to farmers to start planting when the rains resume this summer. The implements include seeds, oxen, agricultural chemicals, and farming tools.

Transportation and Distribution

At the present time, ERA has the capacity to transport 12,073 metric tons per month, using its fleet of 287 trucks and 59 trailers, plus 20 ten-ton trucks temporarily on loan from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Transport, while requiring ongoing support, was not a crucial problem for ERA until few months ago. But because of recent military victories by the EPLF, new distribution areas for ERA that require additional means of transportation have been created in the

highlands of Eritrea. Therefore, ERA has requested $14,920,000.00 for additional 150 trucks and mobile maintenance equipment. Other transportation costs include fuel/oil, tires, spare parts, garage equipment, road repair, and renting of pack animals.

A well organized distribution system of relief supplies exists in Eritrea where ERA operates. But, because of the continuous air raid by the Ethiopian MiGs, food distribution and other activities are often restricted to late afternoons or after sunset.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to mention that the Ethio-Eritrean war, as well as other conflicts between the Ethiopian government and opposition groups, is a substantial obstacle to relief operations throughout Eritrea and Ethiopia. The optimal solution would be for all parties to observe a ceasefire. At least a limited ceasefire would allow safe passage of relief supplies from all points of access to all people in need. In Eritrea, this would mean that private and international agencies who were working in Eritrea's towns would also be able to serve the Eritrean countryside. We call upon governments, humanitarian organizations, and all people of good will to promote such an agreement for safe passage.

In the meantime, however, cross-border operations remain the only way to reach most Eritreans in need. ERA's cross-border channel is viable, reliable, and effective.

The international humanitarian community is facing a complicated problem in the Horn. It requires a multi-faceted solution in order to save lives. Cross-border operations must be one part of the solution. Cross-border operations must receive proportionate support. Cross-border operations are the only hope for the one million children, women and men facing starvation in Eritrea.

I will, therefore, be obliged to appeal to your sense of humanity to bring to bear on this situation, the full weight and attention of this body of the United States Government.

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May I be permitted to recommend that this Congress:

1. support an immediate increase of emergency relief assistance to the Eritrean people through the cross-border operations;

2. advise the regime of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam that this Congress will no longer tolerate its atrocious violations of human rights of the Eritrean people;

3. call upon all parties to the conflict in this region to observe a cease-fire so that humanitarian relief efforts may proceed unimpeded;

4. insist that all parties to the conflict in this region sit down in an internationally recognized forum and negotiate a lasting solution to this conflict, one that is just and equitable for all.

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I would be extremely remiss if I did not take this opportunity to publicly thank the American people for what assistances have been reaching Eritrea through their efforts since 1984.

The wheat and sorghum, the medicines, and the trucks that the American people sent in the past critical famine years saved hundreds of thousands of Eritreans. Indeed, these contributions have made a difference and the people of Eritrea know that America cares.

Thank you for your courtesy and attention.

THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW ARE RETAINED IN COMMITTEE FILES

E R I T R E A

Supporting Documents to Statement of
Tesfa A. Seyoum, Executive Director
Eritrean Relief Committee

Submitted to the *House Select Committee on Hunger*

Washington, D.C.
July 14, 1988

1. "CURRENT RELIEF DEVELOPMENTS IN ERITREA - An Overview", Eritrean Relief Association, Khartoum, May 26, 1988.

2. "Food donor policies seen stymying Ethiopian famine relief", Christian Science Monitor, Wednesday, May 25, 1988.

3. "Eritrea - PROGRAM STATUS and REVISED NEEDS - RELEIF & RECOVERY", Press Release by Eritrean Relief Committee, New York, May 24, 1988.

4. "Eritrea - Ethiopia's untold food aid story", Houston Post, Sunday, May 1, 1988.

5. "ERITREA - FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION ASSESSMENT STUDY", Final Report (An independent evaluation of the food situation in Eritrea submitted to the Emergency Relief Desk, Khartoum); Agriculture & Rural Development Unit, Centre of Development Studies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom; March 1988.

6. "COMPARATIVE FIGURES OF EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES RECEIVED BY ERA FOR 1983-1986", Eritrean Relief Association, Khartoum, 1987.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEITH E. GINGRICH, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, U.S. PEACE SECTION

THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN THE SUDAN

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity extended by your committee to share, on behalf of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), several concerns about the current situation in Sudan. Our objective in doing so is to highlight the human suffering now taking place in Sudan. Both the situation in Sudan and the fact that there is next to no U.S. press coverage about that situation is of grave concern to us.

INTRODUCTION

MCC is the service arm of the North American (U.S. and Canadian) Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. It is among the oldest relief and development agencies in the U.S. MCC began in the 1920s through efforts to provide wheat to starving Mennonites in Russia. It now operates in 50 countries with a team of 1000 workers, 500 of whom serve outside North America in a wide variety of relief and development programs, primarily in Africa, Central/South America, Asia and the Middle East.

Since 1972 MCC has placed between 5 and 15 personnel in Sudan, seconded to the Sudan Council of Churches and other institutions. We currently have 12 workers in northeast Sudan working with Ethiopian refugees. For security reasons we have had no workers in the south since December 1987.

CIVIL WAR (1955-1972)

In 1978 I went to southern Sudan with MCC where I was involved with relief and development programs. Having worked in Nigeria for five years in the late 1960s, on my arrival in Sudan I could not help but make comparisons between the development status of these two countries.

I recall how difficult it was to understand why southern Sudan was so much less developed than Nigeria, even comparing the Sudan of 1978 with the Nigeria of 1968. But of course, on reflection, there was an easy but painful answer--southern Sudan had, until six years earlier, experienced a 17-year long civil war. (Although the war had ended in 1972, the casual observer could still sense the continued underlying animosities between northerners and southerners). During that war tens of thousands of people died and the minimal infrastructure in the south collapsed. Having worked for seven years at rehabilitation and development efforts and having made many close friends while in Sudan, it is tragic to see that country moving into its sixth year of a second round of civil war.

CIVIL WAR NO. 2 (1983-)

The first civil war ended in 1972 through a leading mediation role by the World Council of Churches. Until the early 1980s, then President Nimeiri was held in high esteem by southerners for his peaceful settlement of the conflict that gave the south semi-autonomy. However, by 1983 Nimeiri had essentially abrogated the Addis Ababa Peace Accord by dissolving the southern Assembly, decreeing the division of the south into three separate regions, and in 1983, promulgating the "September Laws." These "Laws" transformed Sudan from a secular state by introducing Sharia Law (an Islamic code of penalties for lawbreaking). Nimeiri's later attempt to replace the entire secular constitution with one based on Islamic principles was, however, thwarted by the National Assembly.

One should note, parenthetically here, that the failure of the Khartoum government, since Nimeiri's overthrow in April 1985, to dispense with Sharia Law stands as a major impediment to negotiating an end to this war.

A majority of southerners interpreted former President Nimeiri's actions as the north's historic efforts at political and economic domination. The old and deep-rooted cultural divide (with religious and ethnic overtones) between the predominantly Arab (Moslem) north and Black African (Christian and Animist) south had once again surfaced.

Sporadic military encounters commenced in 1983 between the newly formed SPLA, led by Col. John Garang, and the government troops. Over the next two years fighting effectively disrupted life throughout 50% of the south (with a population of 6 to 7 million; one-third of the country in terms of both population and land mass). Some 75% of the development programs in the south had to be closed down by mid-1985 for security reasons.

CURRENT SITUATION

The situation has gradually worsened since 1985 with a vast deterioration over the past six months. The SPLA holds sway over 80% of the south and all but besieges the three major towns -- Juba, Malakal and Wau. A military stalemate exists in which neither side can meet their objectives through violent force. Even if the SPLA should "take the south," it will be unable to win militarily in the north. The SPLA demands are not for autonomy but for a secular constitution, shared political power at the center and a fair share of the social and economic development.

Though the world has not learned of their plight, according to reports, the southern Sudanese now face a destitute condition comparable to or surpassing that of the Ethiopians in 1984-85. The fact is, there is virtually no access to southern Sudan these days. These people suffer and die in silence.

SOUTHERNERS UPROOTED

On May 9, 1988 The Guardian reported that 80% of the population in the south have fled their home areas due to the war. Hundreds of thousands have swelled already overburdened southern towns. Over 300,000 have trekked for months into southwest Ethiopia arriving in incredible conditions with as many as 20% estimated to have died along the way. Nearly two million have moved into northern Sudan, including the Khartoum area.

Since the fall of 1987 more than 10,000 Sudanese refugees per month have fled into Ethiopia. Four camps in the middle of the bush and six days by truck from the nearest source of supplies are the homes of these desperate people. An unusually high percentage of these refugees are boys and young men escaping attack by the "militia" (traditional enemies of the southerners equipped by the Sudanese government with modern weapons). A May 1, 1988 New York Times article, in quoting a relief worker, says, "A lot of the boys are nothing more than skin and bones when they arrive."

VOICES FROM JUBA

A Sudanese friend and leader in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan, living in Juba, writes in a letter dated April 10, 1988 --

> "We are not okay at all in the Sudan with this war being fought in the country. People are killed, robbed, displaced and starved to death. Every morning one gets up one finds people at the door not asking for but demanding food. One is rendered helpless. Every night you hear shooting around Juba of all kinds of guns."

Or again these words from an expatriate (former colleague) who wrote from Juba on April 17, 1988 --

> "Meanwhile the war goes on. Even as I write another outbreak of machine-gun fire has just started, somewhere on the outskirts of town.... Many casualties are being brought into Juba from the other side of the river, either from the fighting or from being blown up by foot-mines. The other day I was visiting a friend, a former student of mine. While we were chatting, someone arrived and called her out of the room. She came back looking stricken -- the news had just come that two of her brothers had just been blown up by a landmine, in one of the villages."

HUMAN RIGHTS ATROCITIES

Human rights concerns are of major importance in the context of this conflict. Again there is very little, if any, public awareness of atrocities perpetrated upon civilians. We know there are infractions on both sides and we condone neither. However, there is growing evidence that the government has directly or indirectly inflicted serious human rights abuses upon civilians in the south. Much of this is done through its apparent practice of arming traditional enemies of the southerners (in particular enemies of the Dinka tribe).

In the name of righting old wrongs these "militia," according to reports, raid southern villages, often killing the men and taking hostage women and children.

The two most widely known cases of human rights abuses are those of Al Diein (Southern Kordofan) in March 28-29, 1987 where 1,000 or more civilians were massacred and the killings of thousands of civilians in Wau town area over a several month period during 1987. There is no way to determine the exact number of people killed or children maligned through such raids and attacks upon civilians (or so-called "sympathizers" of the SPLA).

In an article entitled "Khartoum Loses Its Grip," the May 1988 edition of the periodical South reports, and I quote: "It's a dirty war now because the inhabitants of the south are being killed, executed, a Sudanese official said. General Mohamed Zein el-Abdeen, chief of military operations, acknowledged that incidents of brutality and atrocity in Sudan's five-year bush war were on the increase."

For several years the government has equipped these militia, over whom there is virtually no control. This practice is flooding the rural hinterlands with automatic weapons and arms that will insure terrorism against innocent civilians for years to come.

FOOD SITUATION

No one dares to hazard a guess of famine fatalities to date in southern Sudan. What is clear is that the numbers are high. It is also clear that conflict is the primary cause of hunger and starvation in the south. In the interest of maintaining their military positions both sides in this conflict have frustrated and often prevented efforts to deliver food aid to points of critical need.

The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution, in its series of articles entitled "The Famine Weapon in the Horn of Africa," dated June 26, 27, and 28, 1988, raises some disturbing questions about the contributing causes of famine in southern Sudan. It is suggested that by default, if not by design, the government has withheld food from those starving in the south. Also of fundamental importance here is not only the matter of administering "first-aid" (how or if food is distributed to the starving) but preventive measures against hunger. The various "militia," now equipped with modern weapons by the government, have forced tens of thousands of civilians from their homes and land, thus drastically diminishing the food production potential. Insecurity experienced by common villagers, as a result of human rights atrocities, is not an unrelated factor to lower food production, and therefore famine.

ICRC PROGRAM

We were encouraged to learn about the agreement for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to survey southern Sudan for food needs and arrange delivery of food aid to three towns on each side of this conflict. It is important that this plan proceed as agreed upon by both parties.

HUNGER - A POLITICAL PROBLEM

As important as the ICRC program is, it is obvious that even if one-hundred percent successful this effort is only remedial in nature. Hunger and famine will continue until this conflict, itself, is resloved. Until then increasing amounts of food aid will be required; human suffering will intensify. The political implications for hunger in southern Sudan (as elsewhere in the Horn) is an inescapable reality.

For this reason MCC calls for a cut-off of all military aid by all countries and sources to both parties of this conflict. In this respect we applaud the efforts of Representatives Jim Leach and Richard Durbin and whole-heartedly endorse their House Concurrent Resolution 305 which urges the President and Secretary of State to make every effort to bring about negotiations to reslove the armed conflicts that are a principal cause of the food emergency in Ethiopia, Sudan, Mozambique, and Angola. If the issue of hunger is to be dealt with in Sudan and the Horn, the sentiments expressed in this resolution must be given top priority.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion I want to note that our concern is for the people of Sudan and the region:

(1) to permit them to attain basic human rights, including access to food

(2) to provide an opportunity for international organizations to assist in meeting desperate human needs in southern Sudan and elsewhere in the country, and

(3) to attain a speedy and just resolution of the conflict by a negotiated settlement.

We call upon our government to give the Sudan a higher place on its foreign affairs agenda by taking all possible steps, preferably through third parties, to assist the Sudanese towards peaceful resolution of a conflict which costs at least half a million dollars a day and is taking thousands upon thousands of human lives.

[From the New York Times, June 28, 1988]

Sudan Hides Its Famine

Ethiopia deserves the worldwide condemnation it has received for blocking shipment of food to northern regions afflicted by famine and insurgency. But why has Ethiopia's huge neighbor, the Sudan, escaped comparable criticism for what looks like the same offense, in its stricken south?

The United States has, commendably, kept the pressure on Marxist Ethiopia. But Washington says little about use of the famine weapon by traditionally pro-Western Sudan in a simmering civil war between Moslem north and non-Moslem south. The Reagan Administration rightly hopes to avoid driving the shaky Government of Prime Minister Sadiq el-Mahdi into the embrace of Colonel Qadaffi, next door in Libya. Even so, conscience and credibility urge a more forthright stand.

The essential facts are set forth in the Atlanta Constitution this week by two correspondents who managed to travel in rebel-held areas of Ethiopia and southern Sudan. Colin Campbell and Deborah Scroggins report that the Governments of both countries deliberately withhold food from regions where hunger is the worst.

The two countries get their aid from different sides of the Iron Curtain yet are similar indeed in expelling inconvenient relief workers, barring food shipments to rebel-held areas, restricting access by foreign journalists and using food intended for victims of famine to stabilize their regimes. And Sudan supports rebels fighting against the Ethiopian regime, just as Ethiopia supports the rebels in Sudan.

The reporters found compelling evidence that $50 million worth of food provided to Sudan by the U.S. is being given away or sold cheap to the regime's supporters in the north, not to starving people in the south. Food is thus used as a weapon against the insurgent Sudan People's Liberation Army and against civilians, notably the cattle-raising Dinka people. To make matters worse, there's credible evidence that the Sudan is knowingly arming the Taposa people, sworn enemies of the Dinka, resulting in massacres.

The State Department blames bad weather and unsettled conditions for the famine in southern Sudan and insists that the situation differs fundamentally from Ethiopia. House hearings are to be held on the famine in Ethiopia; sensibly, they would extend to the same offenses concerning the same famine, right next door.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 7, 1988]

Ethiopia Orders a Halt To Food Relief in North

Evacuation in War Zone Threatens Millions

By Mary Battiata
Special to The Washington Post

NAIROBI, Kenya, April 6—The government of Ethiopia today ordered all foreign relief workers to leave the war-torn northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigray, and requested that western relief organizations "hand over" their famine relief operations and equipment to the government's own relief agency or local charities.

The International Red Cross, the United Nations and Catholic Relief Services, among others, have millions of dollars in trucks and distribution facilities in the drought-stricken north.

Senior western relief officials in the capital, Addis Ababa, said today's evacuation order will mean chaos and perhaps the eventual collapse of the massive famine-prevention operation in the two provinces, where an estimated 3 million Ethiopians are at risk of starvation.

The Ethiopian government's food distribution program now reaches one-third of that population.

"This will mean leaving two million people without a way to get food," said Jean-Jacques Fresard, the director of International Red Cross operations in Ethiopia, in a telephone interview from Addis Ababa. "It's the worst thing you could imagine."

The evacuation notice, which came in the form of a press release from the government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, requests that all expatriate relief workers in the north be "temporarily" recalled until the north "can be cleansed of bandits." The statement said the evacuation was necessary to ensure the safety of relief workers and to assure "peace and security in all parts of our country."

Eritrea and Tigray have been the site of intense fighting in the past two weeks as rebel armies in both provinces have severely shaken the Mengistu Haile Mariam acknowledged for the first time that the civil wars were a serious threat to Ethiopian sovereignty.

Today's order came with no warning and took the representatives of western relief organizations by surprise. Although recent fighting has resulted in tens of thousands of military casualties, most expatriates in Eritrea and Tigray were working in the government-held provincial capitals and were presumed to be safe.

"I was really shocked by this new development. It really took us off guard," said Rick Machmer, director of the U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Ethiopia, by telephone from Addis Ababa. "I think it's ill-advised and not well thought out. You don't just abruptly, unilaterally order everyone out."

Senior western diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa said the evacuation order likely signals a major offensive action by the Ethiopian Army. The Soviet Union, Ethiopia's military patron, has brought an additional 12 Antonov cargo planes into the country in the past two weeks. In Addis Ababa, witnesses reported continuous nighttime takeoffs and landings of military aircraft at the airport where the Soviet military is headquartered, according to a senior diplomatic source. A roundup of conscripts reportedly is under way in the capital, and the training time for new Army recruits has been shortened, according to the same source.

"We don't have a good fix on the [military] situation, but it's obviously deteriorating," said one senior western relief official. "I would assume they're going to do something defensively, or offensively, that could endanger the lives of everyone, expatriates and Ethiopians."

Earlier this week, the Ethiopian government ordered the three C130 cargo planes being used in the U.N. food airlift relocated from reasons. The five-plane airlift had become critical to the famine-prevention effort as fighting in the north restricted the movement of grain convoys. As of today, the airlift still was functioning, but at reduced capacity, and the continued participation of the Belgian Air Force was in doubt, according to diplomatic sources.

Michael Priestley, the United Nations representative in Addis Ababa, was to meet Thursday with the head of the government Relief and Rehabilitation Commission to discuss the government order. Other relief officials said they would do the same.

"We have millions of dollars of food and trucks up there, almost 600 local employees," said the Red Cross' Fresard, "so we will do everything possible to stay."

The government's decision to evacuate foreign relief workers apparently was based on a desire to avoid "the humiliation of expatriate casualties" in the north, as well as a desire to win the war "at any cost," said one western source by phone from Addis Ababa.

The Ethiopian government requested that several western relief agencies turn their operations over to government relief officials or indigenous relief agencies, none of which are thought to have the managerial ability to take over administration of the entire famine-prevention program in the north.

The United States, the largest single emergency donor to the Ethiopian emergency relief effort, does not distribute food through the Marxist Ethiopian government.

"There's a lot of U.S. government food up there, and we didn't consign it to the government of Ethiopia," said AID's Machmer. "The policy we've been following for the past two years, we supply food to well-established [relief organizations]. If they're gone, we will have to change our policy. We will have to reconsider how we provide relief supplies in total, for at least northern Ethiopia."

The government's military losses in the north are believed to be responsible for Ethiopia's recent decision to sign an agreement ending a protracted dispute with neighboring Somalia. The agreement, signed on Sunday in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, will permit Ethiopia to redeploy tens of thousands of

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 7, 1988]

On the Edge in Ethiopia

JUST A FEW WEEKS ago it appeared the stage was being set for one of the larger man-made atrocities of the late 20th century. Ethiopia's Marxist government was expelling foreign relief workers by way, it was feared, of ending relief and adding officially inflicted starvation to the disaster that drought and war were already creating in the rebel provinces of Eritrea and Tigray. For now, however, plenty of food—the United States is the chief donor—is coming into the ports and being moved into government-held and rebel-held areas alike. Food for the latter also comes in from Sudan. Not all the international agencies are allowed to operate, but Catholic Relief Services, for one, is feeding 850,000 people, against half a million six months ago. The best evidence of famine—streams of dying people on the march—is lacking.

The record of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam in using food denial as a weapon against separatists in Eritrea and insurgents elsewhere obliges everyone to be wary. It is worth asking, however, why his regime seems to be doing it differently this time. Perhaps the international clamor against his earlier cruelty began to tell. He may also be receiving a new message from Moscow. In the Brezhnev period the Kremlin condoned whatever tactics its client used to consolidate power and let others worry about the human costs. But under Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union has now gone out on the world market to buy a quarter million tons of food to send to Ethiopia for drought relief. Is it possible that with the food has gone advice not to unduly obstruct supplies that others send into rebel areas?

The rebels in Eritrea have been fighting since 1952, first against the American-supported Emperor Haile Selassie and then against the Soviet-supported "emperor," Col. Mengistu. Though Ethiopia is billions in arrears for Soviet arms previously received, Moscow has been pouring in fresh arms to replace what the regime lost to rebels earlier this year. At the same time, at the Moscow summit the Soviets kept Ethiopia off the lengthening list of regional conflicts meant to be tackled jointly with the United States. Has a quarter century's evidence that the war is unwinnable yet reached Mikhail Gorbachev, a cost-benefit man if ever the Kremlin had one? Might he be positioning Moscow to mediate the struggle between Marxists in Addis Ababa and Marxists in Eritrea? On humanitarian grounds alone, that would be one Soviet initiative the United States would have to wish well.

[From the New York Times, May 1, 1988]

Refugees From Sudan Strain Ethiopia Camps

By SHEILA RULE
Special to The New York Times

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, April 29 — Thousands of starving refugees from the Sudan, fleeing drought and civil war in their country's south, are crossing the border into southwestern Ethiopia every month and severely taxing overcrowded relief camps.

Officials of the Ethiopian Government, the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies say more than 30,000 of the refugees have streamed into Ethiopia during the last three months, swelling the population at four relief camps to 265,000.

The condition of the refugees when they arrive is said to be as bad as that of Ethiopian famine victims in this country's calamity three years ago.

Relief workers say the majority of those crossing the border are boys and young men of the southern Sudan's Dinka tribe. They say they fled after enemy tribes armed and supported by the Sudanese Government in its nearly five-year-old war against rebels began rounding up whole villages, separating men from women and killing boys. Many girls were taken as slaves, refugees told aid officials.

The refugees, most of whom are from the regions of Equatoria, Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal, walk up to 450 miles and more than three months to reach Ethiopia, eating only roots and leaves and drinking contaminated water along the way. They arrive at relief camps acutely malnourished and dehydrated. Many can barely walk.

"A lot of the boys are nothing more than skin and bones when they arrive," one worker who visited the camps said. "They tell us that 20 percent of the people who left with them died along the way. Part of the problem once they reach the refugee camps is that these boys do not have the families that would normally help them in their rehabilitation. The camps were not adequate to meet the needs of the influx of people and suddenly became so overstretched that they couldn't cope."

At one time, as many as 30 people were dying in the camps each day, a United Nations official said, but the figure has dropped to three or four as services have been improved. Sanitation, malnutrition and water supplies remain problems at the sites, but the United Nations is working with the Government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and the Ethiopian Red cross to upgrade the camps.

Doctors, nurses, nutritionists and medical supplies have been sent to the area. Relief workers say help for the refugees is hampered by poor roads, rugged terrain and the camps' remoteness.

Earlier this week, the World Food Program announced an $8.6 million emergency operation for the refugees, which will include supplying basic food rations. David Morton, director of operations for the program, said in a statement that arrangements were being made to borrow stocks from the Government to insure that there was no gap in food distribution until his agency's first shipments arrived.

The announcement came after the Ethiopian Government, which itself is faced with a war in the north and a drought that has put more than seven million people at risk of starvation, appealed for food, clothing and shelter for the refugees.

About 182,000 people have crowded into the Itang refugee camp. The largest of the four camps, it is near Gambela in Iiubabor Province, nearly 600 miles west of this capital city. United Nations officials say the Ethiopian authorities have agreed to close the camp to any new arrivals and to send them instead to centers to be established at other locations.

It is hoped that any new camps will be limited to 20,000 persons, easing management and delivery of assistance. Itang is to be divided into 10 villages to provide for easier monitoring of the refugees' needs.

The war in the southern Sudan pits the Government in the largely Arab north against the Sudan People's Liberation Army, a guerrilla force that has drawn mainly from the Dinka tribe. Some aid officials have suggested that other tribes have been turned into a Government-sponsored militia.

[From the Christian Science Monitor, July 11, 1988]

Sudanese government and rebels under fire

Both blamed for not letting aid through to starving southerners

By Robert M. Press
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Khartoum, Sudan

Pressure is building at home and abroad for the Sudanese government to rush food to starving people in its war-torn southern regions.

In Wau more than 4,000 destitute and hungry people huddle on verandas, partially exposed to the rains.

Every morning, "the priests come out and pick up some 20 to 30 dead," says a Sudanese relief official, citing details from a recent survey of Wau by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In Aweil, another southern town, 2,481 persons died of hunger or hunger-related diseases between May 1 and June 26, according to radio reports from there.

In Malakal, a large southern city and main drop-off point for food convoys, relief stocks are likely to run out soon, Sudanese and international relief officials say.

In Torit, some 10 adults and five children are dying of hunger each day, according to Sudanaid, a local group, and Norwegian Church Aid. Rebels recently attacked a food and military convoy en route to Torit from Juba.

All four of these towns are held by the government and caught in the five-year war launched by southern rebels seeking a stronger voice in a unified Sudan.

Southern Sudan: hungry travelers stop to rest along journey in search of food

(over)

Both the government and the rebels are being blamed for contributing to the starvation by their action – or inaction.

Some Sudanese church and government officials and Western diplomats are calling for Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi to act quickly to relieve the suffering of an estimated 3.5 million people in need of food assistance.

These officials want prompt approval of an ICRC plan to deliver food to stricken towns in both government- and rebel-held areas. But the ICRC plan has run into a series of snags and objections, especially from the military, that could delay deliveries for months, according to Sudanese and international sources here.

The government and rebels agreed earlier this year that the ICRC would be allowed to assist three towns on each side of the conflict. On the government side, the towns are Wau, Malakal, and Juba. Recently, the commissioner of the southeastern province of Bahr el Ghazal called publicly for the prime minister to allow the ICRC to fly into Aweil to assess the hunger. But Aweil is not one of the three towns agreed upon, and there has been some criticism of the fact that Juba, which gets fairly regular food deliveries, was picked over Aweil, which rarely receives supplies.

According to a source close to the ICRC, high-level military officers now object to the ICRC going ahead with food deliveries to the rebel-held towns, because they say these towns have few civilians and the deliveries would simply help the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

One suggestion by some Sudanese and international officials is for the government to allow food convoys to travel without military escort in the war zones. Rebel leader John Garang says any convoy with military elements is a target for the rebels. Sudan, however, continues to insist on military escorts. "We are expected to deliver [food] to the needy. We cannot send vehicles unguarded," a Sudanese official explains.

During the last couple of years, rebel missiles have brought down at least two planes as they approached or departed one of these southern cities. And the SPLA has been attacking food convoys coming by road or by barge. "The plan of the rebels is to starve people by hitting planes and trains and barges," a Sudanese official says.

The Sudan government says it cannot easily get food relief to Wau, Aweil, and Malakal because transport routes are unsafe.

But critics here point out that large military cargo planes, capable of carrying relief food but which apparently do not, regularly fly in and out of both Wau and Aweil.

"This is genocide" says one Sudanese relief official who, like most others interviewed, asked not to be named. The government, he said, is allowing people in Aweil and Wau to starve because most of the residents in these towns are Dinka, the tribe which forms the backbone of the rebel movement.

"The Army [in these areas] is not starving," says one source in Khartoum, adding that the Army is not deliberately trying to starve people but is "indifferent" to their plight.

Several Western officials allege that some military personnel are directly or indirectly selling some of the commercial food that has reached those areas in occasional convoys. Military officials could not be reached for comment.

Church leaders in both Aweil and Wau have pleaded with Prime Minister Mahdi for prompt food deliveries.

"The government should assure delivery to those areas," says a Western diplomat in Khartoum. And he added that representatives from a number of donor nations "have gone to the prime minister quite a few times, directly," to urge food deliveries.

The prime minister, according to this diplomat, has "been responsive" and had to push to accomplish the food deliveries that were already made this year. The prime minister has also just issued an appeal to the UN for emergency assistance to help feed refugees from other countries and displaced Sudanese who have fled drought and fighting.

[From the Christian Science Monitor, June 29, 1988]

CRISIS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

ROBERT M. PRESS

'We need help,' says Sudanese aid worker Clement Katinya, comforting ailing refugee near Pibor Post

Sudanese flee in search of food, safety

In drought- and war-hit southern areas, relief workers have their hands full

By Robert M. Press
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Pibor Post, Sudan

"The place where I can find food is the place where I can stop."

Athian Deng, who does not know his age, but appears to be in his late teens, sat quietly on a small rise of earth at the edge of this remote town of mostly thatched-roof huts. He was barefoot and wore only the shredded remains of a pair of brown shorts. His eyes looked a bit bleary. He spoke slowly, without much energy.

He said he had walked here from Aweil, southwestern Sudan, a distance of more than 300 miles. Another 100 miles ahead, in Ethiopia, lay several refugee camps for the thousands of Sudanese who each month are fleeing a five year-civil war and famine.

An exodus from southern Sudan to Ethiopia and to some government-held cities in the country has been going on for several years. But it has grown in recent months, as fighting has intensified and drought has continued in some areas, say United Nations and international relief officials in Kenya and Ethiopia.

Because distances are so long and there is so little food en route, many Sudanese are dying of hunger or disease, these officials say. Many others arrive in Ethiopia severely malnourished. Ethiopia itself is struggling with drought and civil war.

The few international organizations trying to deliver food to those fleeing are running into political obstacles or logistical tangles, such as a lack of roads and dirt airstrips that turn to muddy soup when it rains.

Please see SUDAN page 9

JOAN FORBES - STAFF

SUDAN from page 7

"I'm suffering from hunger, and I have no food," Mr. Deng told this reporter and a Norwegian photographer, who were among the first journalists to reach this rebel-held area along one of the main exodus routes to Ethiopia.

Deng said he survived by "eating wild fruits and leaves of the tree."

Nearly 6,000 people, headed for Ethiopia, passed through this town alone from the beginning of May to mid-June, says Clement Katinya, an official with the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association. The group, run by southern Sudanese, operates only in rebel-held areas.

Ethiopian Red Cross officials, who help with refugee work, anticipate some 6,000 to 10,000 southern Sudanese will arrive in Ethiopia each month this year.

"Violence and the political situation have been pushing them out of the south," says Alan Peters, representative of the UN High Commission on Refugees in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital.

Mawut Madol, also interviewed here, says he left his home in Bor, about 100 miles to the west, because the Sudanese Army "took the cows, they took the grain, then they burned the houses, then they dispersed the people. They killed so many people. I saw people falling, and I ran."

Mr. Madol said he was on the way to "the place where people are going" – Ethiopia. "I don't know whether it is far or near," he said.

Madol, who speaks some English, insisted it was the Sudanese Army, not an armed tribal group, which attacked his area. But in other parts of southern Sudan, attacks by tribal militias have caused people to flee their homes. The militias attack their traditional enemies, often the Dinka tribe which is the backbone of the rebel movement. The uprooted tell stories of men, women, and children murdered or enslaved by the militias.

When southern families flee, most of the women, children, and old people head north to government towns, the shortest route to food and safety. Most young men, fearing attacks by the Army (as suspected SPLA supporters) or militias, head for Ethiopia. Some of the men intend to join the SPLA. Others simply have few other options to reach food.

Sudan's government does not deny providing arms to some tribal groups, but says this was done to allow the tribes to protect themselves from attacks by the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). These tribes have age-old "customary feuds," says Omer Elsheikh, Sudan's ambassador to Kenya.

The government also says if the rebels stopped fighting, famine relief could be carried out on a much larger scale in the south. But SPLA officials claim the government arming of tribes antagonistic to the Dinka is a deliberate attempt to wipe out the Dinka. SPLA leader Col. John Garang says attacks by these tribal groups have increased in recent months because of new arms from the government.

Meanwhile, most relief efforts in southern Sudan have been stymied.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has tried to carry out simultaneous surveys of food needs in three government-held cities and three SPLA-held towns. But Western sources say the efforts have run into one delay after another as either the rebels or government disagreed on details of the ICRC operations. And overland roads are often mined or made impassable by rivers.

Norwegian People's Aid, a private group, has been delivering some food to a few rebel-held towns, including Pibor Post and Kapoeta. Several other private relief groups are attempting to get aid into towns including Kongor and Leri. Drought and the movement of people fleeing present severe hardships in such places, says an international relief expert.

But even when relief food does arrive here, Katinya faces an unpleasant dilemma: Should the food go to people walking to Ethiopia or to villagers running out of food due to two years of drought?

"Our situation here . . . is very bad," he says. "We need help, really."

The Weapon of Famine

Politics of starvation in the Horn of Africa

By Colin Campbell
and Deborah Scroggins

The Atlanta Journal
THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

June 26-28 series
and related 1988 articles

The Atlanta Journal
THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Post Office Box 4689 Atlanta, Georgia 30302 (404) 526-5151

July 5, 1988

To whom it may concern:

The enclosed series of articles raise extremely troubling questions about the current food shortages in the Horn of Africa, where a half-billion-dollar famine relief effort is now underway. Because there has been so little solid information and so much misinformation about the subject, I thought it important to share with you what we found.

The reporters, Colin Campbell and Deborah Scroggins, have been dealing with these kinds of emergency aid problems for the past two years. After several months in Africa this spring, they came away with evidence that not only the Marxist government of Ethiopia, but also the pro-western government of Sudan, are intentionally turning a drought into a famine.

The two governments are systematically blocking international food aid, throwing out relief workers and reporters, and generally covering up the facts as part of an overall military strategy against their respective rebels.

Congressional hearings have been scheduled later this month to discuss the issues raised in these articles and the role of our government in monitoring the use of food aid in the region.

Sincerely,

Bill Kovach
Editor

THE FAMINE WEAPON IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

First of Three Articles

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution has been investigating the politics of emergency relief in Asia and Africa for a year. In February it turned its attention to the Horn of Africa. The investigation there included the first journey by an American reporter through hundreds of miles of newly conquered rebel territory in Ethiopia's Tigre province and the first journey by a reporter into parts of western Sudan where tens of thousands of starving southerners have been gathering. The field reporting was done between late February and early May.

Selective starvation in war zones triggers selective anger abroad

By Colin Campbell
and Deborah Scroggins
Staff W

JUN 2 6 1988

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Another drought hit much of Ethiopia and Sudan last year, and the Horn of Africa has collapsed again into the world's grimmest zone of famine.

Frightened farm families in northern Ethiopia have been walking the roads in search of charity. Starving black tribesmen from southern Sudan have grown so desperate for food money that thousands have sold their children to Arabs for as little as a dollar each. Once again, the West has mounted a gigantic relief effort to feed the hungry.

But is drought the main culprit, as governments and aid workers often say? And are the hungriest people being fed? In both cases, the answer is no.

Hundreds of interviews and months of observation across a thousand miles of Ethiopia and Sudan suggest that the drought is of secondary importance in explaining a famine that now threatens millions of people.

The chief cause of the famine in the Horn of Africa now is the use of hunger as a weapon by the governments of Ethiopia and Sudan, which have been fighting bitter civil wars in the provinces where the hunger is worst. The drought, though certainly damaging, has served largely to enhance the value of that weapon.

Southern Sudan, in fact, is not even especially dry. And yet the little-known famine there — barely mentioned by the U.S. government, a major food donor — is causing much sharper suffering than hunger is in Ethiopia.

"This is political starvation, to my mind," said a Western-educated relief expert in the northern Ethiopian town of Adigrat. He said tons of food provided by other nations are being stored just up the road, but that the Ethiopian government stopped aid workers from distributing it after Adigrat and other towns were captured by rebels. The expert asked not to be named for fear of punishment by the government.

In southern Sudan, also convulsed by civil war, a Moslem Arab tribesman was asked why thousands of emaciated blacks from the south have been streaming north. Were they running away from government-armed militiamen like himself?

"Yes, yes," the Arab answered, nodding with enthusiasm. "It is a holy war against the pagans."

The governments of both countries — mountainous Ethiopia,

with its ancient Christian roots, and its sprawling neighbor, Sudan, where the Blue Nile meets the White Nile before rolling into Egypt — have taken several counterinsurgent steps that have helped deprive entire regions of food:

- The two governments have prevented food shipments from reaching civilians in rebellious areas by denying relief agencies passage through government lines, and in some cases by threatening to bomb truck convoys carrying food.
- They have expelled foreign relief workers from many contested areas and prevented them from entering others, making it nearly impossible to assess the need for food, to hand it out or monitor its distribution.
- They have obscured the details and gravity of the famine by preventing journalists and diplomats from inspecting conditions for themselves.
- They have used the world's food donations to help stabilize their regimes. And in Sudan, at least, government-armed militias have destroyed or stolen food and spread famine directly.

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The policies of the two governments have a dreadful symmetry. The tightly controlled, Marxist, pro-Soviet government of Ethiopia has been aiding the rebels in southern Sudan. The disorganized, Islamic, anti-communist authorities of Sudan have been aiding the rebels in northern Ethiopia.

By supporting each other's rebellions, Ethiopia and Sudan have helped perpetuate conflicts in which selective starvation has played a major role, specialists in the region say.

These whirling ironies also have involved other powers. Key donors and organizers of emergency food to the region — notably the United Nations in Ethiopia's case and the U.S. government in the case of Sudan — have been so deferential in their public dealings with one or the other African government that they have helped mask the famine's origins and have helped confuse the donating public about the destination of the relief they are supplying.

Until a few months ago, the United Nations coordinated an enormous international relief effort in Ethiopia that was given wide publicity. Yet when Addis Ababa expelled more than 50 foreign relief workers from the country's northern war zones, the United Nations stopped dramatizing the famine's threat to millions of northern Ethiopians, and offered only mild criticisms of the expulsion.

Criticizing the United Nations for its timidity, Richard Williamson, assistant secretary of state in charge of international organizational affairs, told a U.N. panel last month, "We must never leave ourselves open to the shame of silence." Williamson said the United States had saved lives in the Horn of Africa "merely by our raising the issue" of Ethiopia's conduct.

In the same vein, Chester Crocker, assistant secretary of state for Africa, told Congress two months ago, "We intend to keep the spotlight of public opinion on the government of Ethiopia."

But the terrible starvation in the southern provinces of Sudan, which affects hundreds of thousands of Sudanese, has dropped into darkness.

According to a variety of aid experts, travelers, missionaries, scholars and diplomats, the famine in southern Sudan owes much of its virulence to the political and military policies of the Sudanese government, its army and the country's Islamic parties — the authorities, in short. Yet the Reagan administration has had little to say about those policies.

The reason seems to be that Sudan is one of a few "essential strategic relationships" in Africa that "figure prominently in our national security," in Crocker's words. Neighboring Ethiopia, by contrast, is the Soviet Union's closest ally in Africa.

Sudan has been a past recipient of enormous amounts of U.S. military aid, and this year it is to get $72 million in U.S. food and development aid. Practically none of that food is reaching southern Sudan, according to relief workers.

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Late last summer, the United Nations and other centers of agricultural expertise, including the U.S. government, began reporting that little rain was falling in the Horn of Africa and that crops had failed. They warned then of famine, and relief experts and volunteer agencies began focusing again on Ethiopia and Sudan, which never really had recovered from the famine of 1984-85.

Now there are broad hollows of

hunger across this whole vast stretch of Africa, from the highlands of northern Ethiopia to the banks of the Bahr el-Arab River in western Sudan, and from the rubble of Ethiopian air strikes to the terror of Sudanese militia attacks.

Those deprived of their normal crops include several million Ethiopians and Sudanese outside the war zones. Yet the residents of these peaceful zones — victims of dry weather, locusts, rats, environmental deterioration, poverty, government mismanagement and other ills — are being fed by their governments with food sent from abroad. They may be victims of drought, but they are not victims of famine.

The famine victims live in the war zones. In some cases, they are surrounded by surplus food worth millions of dollars. Much of this food, donated largely by the West, has collected in a few government-controlled ports and provincial capitals of Ethiopia and Sudan. Despite long negotiations and frequent announcements of cooperation, authorities in both countries have prevented foreign organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross from distributing this food to the most desperate people because most of them live outside areas of government control.

"If we could get food now, we could distribute it," said the frustrated relief expert in Adigrat, a tidy Italian-looking city the government's troops abandoned in such a rush that they left behind more than 1 million rounds of ammunition. "Why don't the food agencies put pressure on the government?" he asked, without much hope.

"Aid agencies work through capitals, no matter how heinous they may be," said a State Department official in Washington with extensive experience in the Horn. Aid agencies are weak, the official said; governments, including foreign donor governments, are relatively strong.

Many countries exert some influence in Ethiopia and Sudan. The Soviet Union, the United States, Cuba, Britain, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Kenya and others have been supplying the region's armies or governments, aiding rebels or providing famine relief to civilians, or playing several of these roles at the same time.

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One defense against the use of hunger as a weapon is emergency food aid from abroad. But food is not simply used to alleviate civilian hunger. Its functions are more complicated than that, and more paradoxical than most Westerners realize.

Food aid may be overtly or covertly provided, it may be a political tool or an act of charity, and it can keep people tied to one region or lure them into another. It can be withheld as well as given, and it can feed soldiers (or at least allow them to be fed) as well as women and children.

In Sudan and Ethiopia, all these uses come into play. The relief agencies that struggle to serve famine-stricken areas also supply large quantities of food to the Ethiopian and Sudanese governments. Foreign food therefore is helping the two governments maintain themselves even as it feeds civilians under their control.

The foreign aid agencies are supplying the rebels, too. In northern Ethiopia especially, foreign food entering the country via Sudan is one of the rebels' most effective countermeasures against the forced cutoff of food in time of drought.

As in Afghanistan, Cambodia and other countries racked by civil war, one of the relief agencies' major functions — though not always intentionally — is to support civilians in rebellious territories. They thereby support the rebels who depend on those civilians.

The region's armies deny they are eating food meant for civilians. They say their governments or liberation fronts supply their fighters from their own resources. Foreign donors of food also deny feeding combatants.

In fact, however, neither the U.S. government nor any other foreign donor knows exactly how its food is being used in Sudan or northern Ethiopia. Moreover, every army in the region, government and insurgent, regularly accuses its enemies of eating food meant for hungry civilians. Experienced relief workers point out that every ton of food from abroad, in any case, takes that much pressure off domestic food supplies.

No one knows exactly how many people in southern Sudan are starving now or how many people in northern Ethiopia soon may begin to starve. Even by the most conservative estimates, though, at least 5 million human beings are threatened with dire shortages of food.

Few experts have urged that the West withhold emergency aid. But in the absence of political steps that

might break the region's vicious circles, imported food feeds war as well as people.

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In Ethiopia, the rebels as well as the government have been accused of interfering with food convoys and occasionally destroying food. But a detailed review of the record suggests that the Ethiopian government has made much more extensive use of hunger as a weapon than have the rebels in Eritrea and Tigre provinces.

- Many Tigreans have told journalists and aid workers that, in areas controlled by the government, officials often have demanded that food recipients pay their back taxes before receiving food.
- Civilians who visit food centers risk being drafted into the Ethiopian army or being forced to leave Tigre and resettle in other provinces.
- Even when the Ethiopian government controlled more of the north than it does now, and it permitted relief agencies to truck food into the hinterland, the government almost never let the trucks leave the main highways and carry food into rural areas, where most of the people live.
- Government rules on markets, licenses and transportation have hampered the movement of some privately owned Ethiopian food into the north.
- Government MiG jets sometimes strafe or bomb food trucks that travel by daylight.

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The situation in Sudan is less clear-cut. Khartoum denies preventing food shipments from reaching the rebellious south, and it has promised to let international food be distributed there.

For several years, however, many relief workers and other experts have cited evidence that Khartoum is willing to let the south go hungry so long as the rebels, members of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), keep fighting for a secular government.

Moreover, the Sudanese government almost never has fulfilled its promises to let food move freely. In some cases, the government's defenders argue, the obstacle was not the weak, elected government of Prime Minister Sadiq Mahdi but rather the army or the bureaucracy or wealthy Arab merchants. Yet these separate groups frequently are united in their attitudes toward the south.

They tend to agree with the government and with the country's Islamic parties that the southern rebellion should be crushed. Western diplomats say several of Sudan's influential groups are ruthless about how the crushing should be done.

Sudan's three southern provinces cover an area as large as Texas, and their inhabitants are black and mostly pagan, with a substantial minority of Christians. The country's sprawling, arid northern provinces are populated by Arabic-speaking Moslems. Northerners have long considered themselves culturally superior to black southerners. They also outnumber the southerners, who make up only 5 million to 8 million of the country's 25 million people.

A vicious war has raged between the government and the SPLA since 1983, when President Gaafar Nimeiri, who has since been overthrown, decreed a nationwide return to traditional Islamic law and revoked an agreement that had made the south significantly autonomous. The civil war has grown ever since.

Some observers reason that the dislocations of war — people thrown off their farms and forced to abandon their cattle — have intensified the effects of drought, and they argue that both sides of the conflict are equally responsible for the dislocation. If there were no war, there would be no chaos. Yet many independent experts and relief workers insist that the government bears more responsibility than the rebels.

Southerners see the Arab-dominated government as a foreign power in the south, and several of its regular army units are known to have massacred civilians and burned villages.

More important, the government has been arming militias of allied tribesmen on the northern fringes of the south and also deep within the three southern provinces. One thing these militias have in common is an abiding hostility toward the Dinka. Numbering perhaps 3 million people, the Dinka are the largest southern tribe and are key supporters of the rebellion.

Relief workers and other witnesses have reported that these government-sponsored militias are stealing cattle, destroying crops, murdering civilians, taking women and children into slavery, and dislocating hundreds of thousands of people. Douglas Johnson, an Ameri-

can scholar of Sudanese history, has charged in a just-published report for the Minority Rights Group in London that the government in some areas is pursuing a simple, brutal policy of depopulation.

"Well-placed sources speak of a government policy to depopulate northern Bahr el-Ghazal [province] through Arab militia activity," the 11-page report says. The militias "have concentrated almost exclusively on Dinka civilian targets" and "they have contributed greatly to the destruction of food supplies and the creation of a large displaced population."

Even the State Department, which has tried to avoid public criticism of the Sudanese government, wrote in its congressionally mandated human rights report for 1987 that "government-armed militias were involved in several massacres" last year and that "innocent people were caught in the cross fire."

Massacres by government-armed militias have intensified since then, and so have dislocation and famine. Meanwhile, more and more of the south has become inaccessible to relief workers and journalists.

Much of the hunger might have been averted by the provision of emergency food. But relief officials say the government and its allies have prevented trucks and barges carrying international food from moving into rebel areas. The government also has harassed and expelled foreign relief organizations and officials when they became too critical.

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There is no evidence that any foreign organization has tried to manage the news of hunger in Ethiopia and Sudan with anything like the determination that the two governments have shown. But the United Nations, which until a few months ago issued regular warnings that 7 million people were at risk in Ethiopia, has been notably silent about the situation since Ethiopia's president, Mengistu Haile Mariam, declared total war on the famine-threatened north at the end of March.

Michael Priestly, chief U.N. representative in Addis Ababa, refused to speak to journalists after Mengistu's dramatic announcement, and he declined to be interviewed when Mengistu expelled the foreign relief workers a week later. One of Priestly's assistants explained that the Ethiopian Politburo and the army now were making all the decisions, and the United Nations did not want to make them more intractable by going public.

Since early April, however, the United Nations has failed even through quiet diplomacy to persuade Mengistu — who is widely believed to be in personal command of such matters — to let the foreign relief agencies resume work in the north.

During a visit to Addis Ababa last month, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar evidently persuaded Mengistu to let the United Nations — but no other foreign organization — put some foreign officials in the north. But their return remains sharply limited two months after the expulsion and a month after Mengistu's meeting with Perez de Cuellar.

An official of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has not concealed its low opinion of the Ethiopian government's refusal to cooperate, said privately that the United Nations had responded "bureaucratically" to the "ruthless" use of hunger.

The International Red Cross, prevented from distributing its northern food supplies to the hungry, finally has agreed to turn over the food to the government rather than let it rot.

U.N. officials have told reporters in recent weeks, anonymously, for the most part, that the Ethiopian government's relief operation is working well and that the government fed more than 1 million people in Eritrea and Tigre in April. They also have suggested that the return of a few U.N. personnel to the north will reassure donors that their food is being distributed properly. Few other aid experts see the situation in such a positive light.

The United Nations is not alone in refusing to criticize Ethiopia publicly. Many voluntary aid agencies have muted their anger and frustration, and Ethiopia's allies in the Soviet bloc have made no public criticism.

Assistant Secretary of State Williamson said in an interview about the subdued U.N. behavior, "The situation is so acute, the potential dangers so great that there comes a time when quiet diplomacy is not enough and you have to raise your voice."

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Unlike Ethiopia, Sudan has close ties to the West. Its military officers have good friends in the Pentagon, and the Sudanese government sees eye to eye with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which are crucial U.S. allies in the region.

The rebels in southern Sudan have been relying on Ethiopia and other Soviet allies for help.

It is largely for these reasons, diplomats suggest, that U.S. statements about Sudan have said very little about the famine in the south or about the government's role in it.

In March, for example, Roy Stacy, deputy assistant secretary of state for Africa, told the House Select Committee on Hunger that the southern Sudanese rebels had "severely restricted the opportunities for food to move easily to those in need." He said the rebels had shot down planes, attacked convoys trying to relieve government garrisons and in general behaved very badly.

Stacy did not mention the Sudanese government militias that have been massacring southerners and stealing and destroying food. Nor did he mention the government's expulsion of American and European relief workers from the south — though one of the expelled groups, World Vision, had been the main channel of U.S. government food aid in the south, according to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

When Stacy referred to the government's southern garrison town of Wau, where the Sudanese army and its allied militias have massacred hundreds of civilians, he said only that "hunger and violence have been most acute" in Wau.

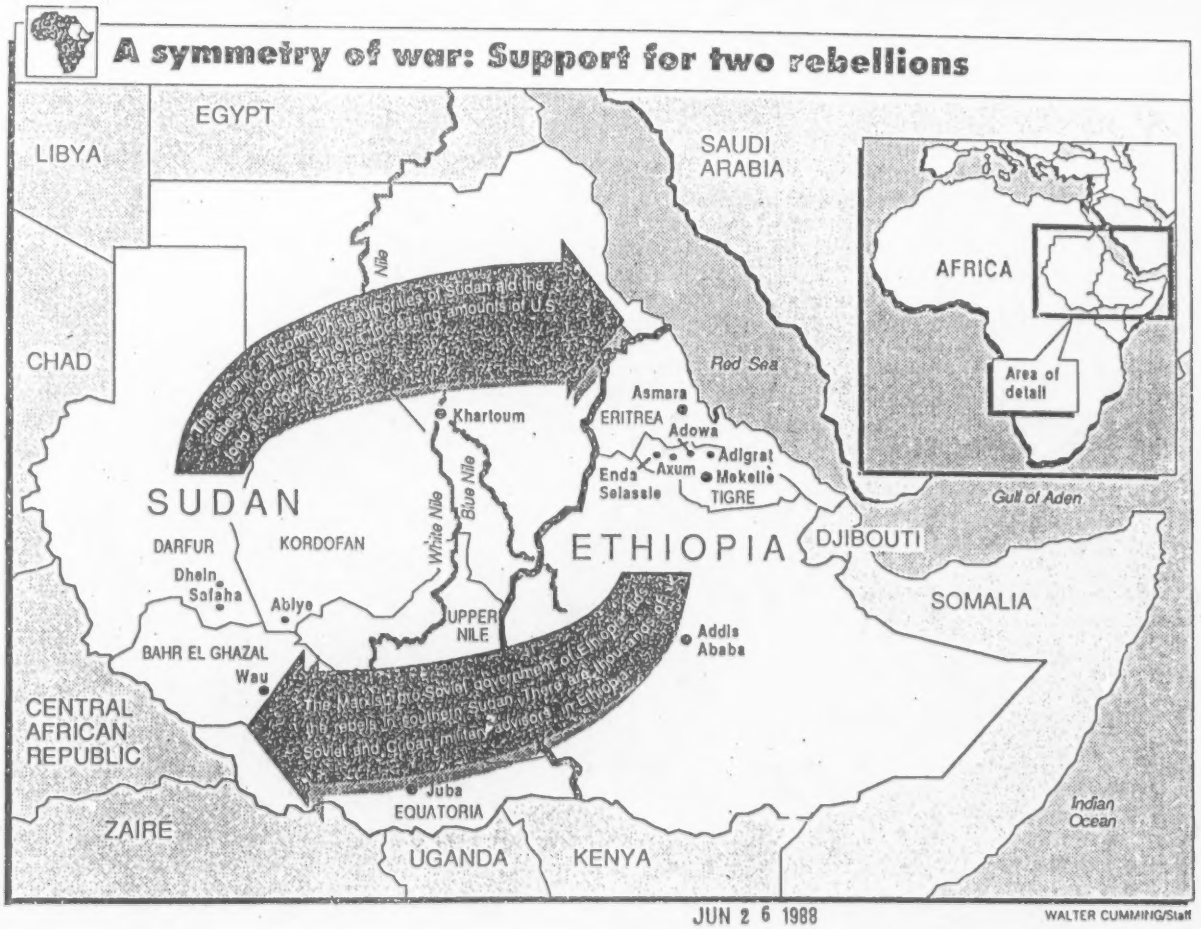
"The United States," he conceded vaguely about the relief effort, "has not been content with the pace of [food] deliveries. ... We have found Sudanese authorities similarly frustrated with delays of relief shipments. They have assured us that an even greater effort will be made to secure timely movements."

Stacy's confidence in the Sudanese authorities' sincerity in saying they want to feed the south diverges radically from the assessment of some U.S. diplomats in Khartoum. One of these skeptics said of some Sudanese officials, "Never doubt their ability to lie right to your face."

U.S. officials from President Reagan on down have spoken out on behalf of famine victims in Ethiopia. He and other presidents, vice presidents and secretaries of state have in the past criticized Vietnam, Afghanistan, Cambodia and other governments for aggravating hunger and impeding relief efforts.

Yet in recent weeks, several senior U.S. diplomats have denied that Washington should be focusing attention on the famine in southern Sudan, and they have insisted that the State Department is in no way responsible for the scant attention Sudan has received.

"We respond to what's in the press," said Robert Gribbin, a State Department official for East Africa. "We don't drive the process."


A symmetry of war: Support for two rebellions
EGYPT
LIBYA
SAUDI ARABIA
CHAD
Nile
Red Sea
AFRICA
Area of detail
Asmara
ERITREA
Adowa
Adigrat
Axum
Mekelle
TIGRE
Enda Selassie
Khartoum
SUDAN
DARFUR
KORDOFAN
Dhein
Safaha
Abiye
White Nile
Blue Nile
ETHIOPIA
DJIBOUTI
Gulf of Aden
SOMALIA
UPPER NILE
Addis Ababa
BAHR EL GHAZAL
Wau
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Juba
EQUATORIA
ZAIRE
UGANDA
KENYA
Indian Ocean
JUN 2 6 1988
WALTER CUMMING/Staff

Sudan

GEOGRAPHY: With an area of 967,494 square miles, more than a fourth the size of the United States, Sudan is Africa's largest country. Watered, like Egypt, by the Nile and its tributaries, most of northern Sudan is desert. Much of the middle is a rolling, often arid plain, and only the swampy south gets much rain.

Mahdi

LIFE AND CULTURE: In 1988, the population was estimated at more than 24 million. The infant mortality rate in 1987 was 103 per 1,000 live births, nearly as bad as the rate in Ethiopia. Life expectancy in Sudan is 52 years, compared with 75 in the United States. Seventy percent of Sudanese are Sunni Moslems, who live mostly in the north, and 20% are pagans, who live mainly in the south. Five percent are Christians and live mainly in the south.

HISTORY: Northern Sudan shared elements of the ancient civilization of Egypt and Nubia, and parts of the country were Christianized before Islam swept most of the region in the Middle Ages. At the end of the 19th century, the British occupied Sudan and, with Egypt's help, ruled north and south separately until independence in 1955. North and south have fought intermittently since.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: An unstable coalition government of elected political parties runs Sudan. The chief parties, including the Umma (People's) Party of Prime Minister Sadiq Mahdi, are strongly Islamic and want to extend the rule of Islamic law throughout the country. Sudan depends heavily on Western aid and Arab aid, and Libya supplies it with weapons.

PRINCIPAL REBEL GROUP: The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was formed in 1983 and is led by Col. John Garang, a Christian who was educated in Iowa. The SPLA, which seeks to create a secular Sudanese state, draws much of its force from the alienation of the southern, black, non-Islamic population from the dominant Arab culture of the north. The SPLA has about 20,000 soldiers.

JUN 2 6 1988

Ethiopia

GEOGRAPHY: With 471,799 square miles, Ethiopia is nearly the size of Alaska. The heart of the country is mountainous, cut by dramatic ravines, and gets most of its rain during the summer.

LIFE AND CULTURE: The 1988 population is estimated at 48.3 million. The infant mortality rate in 1987 was 118 per 1,000 live births, compared with the U.S. average of 11, and life expectancy is 50 years, or two-thirds of what it is in the United States. The main religious affiliations include Ethiopian Orthodox (Coptic) Church, 40%; Moslem, 40%; pagan, 15%. The country has many well-educated people but is one of the world's poorest.

Mengistu

HISTORY: Ethiopia's ancient cities go back 2,000 years, and Ethiopia was Christianized in the fourth century. Isolated by its geography, it resisted Islam and the growth of European colonialism. In the 1890s, Italy occupied Eritrea and held it for half a century; briefly in the 1930s, Italy also conquered the rest of the country. Haile Selassie was the last emperor. After he was deposed in 1974, the government's relations with the United States grew very cold.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: The regime has evolved since the 1974 revolution from a left-leaning military junta into a one-party Marxist-Leninist state. Its undisputed strongman since 1977 has been Mengistu Haile Mariam. The press, the economy and many other institutions are tightly controlled, and there are said to be tens of thousands of secret police.

PRINCIPAL REBEL GROUPS: The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) was formed in 1970. It is Marxist and includes at least 40,000 armed men and women. The Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is Marxist and has about 15,000 fighters. The EPLF wants to form a separate Eritrean nation; the TPLF wants more autonomy and would like to see the Ethiopian government overthrown. The government still controls the capitals of both provinces, but not much else.

JUN 2 6 1988

COLIN CAMPBELL/Staff

A victory parade in a time of hunger

The areas stricken with the worst hunger in the Horn of Africa were gripped first by civil war. Here, in the northern Ethiopian town of Enda Selassie, guerrillas of the Tigre People's Liberation Front show off some weapons they've captured from the Ethiopian army.

Tanks, artillery, trucks, anti-aircraft guns, small arms, mountains of ammunition — all Soviet-made — have swollen the arsenals of 15,000 guerrillas in Tigre province and 40,000 more in neighboring Eritrea.

As rebels in Sudan as well as Ethiopia capture more and more territory, the governments have retaliated by hindering a large international relief effort that was intended to feed the victims of drought. At least 5 million people in the war-torn provinces of both nations — including the children (left) watching the parade in Enda Selassie — are threatened with dire food shortages as a result of the governments' refusal to let the foreign relief pass through government lines.

JUN 2 6 1989

Law against hunger as a weapon

Using hunger as a weapon is not new. The medieval attackers of walled cities starved their enemies, and the early European colonists in America starved Indians. France starved Germany at the end of World War I, and Adolf Hitler starved Leningrad during World War II.

But the organized condemnation of such tactics is new, and some legal scholars think that Ethiopia and Sudan are violating international law.

Professor Robert Goldman of American University in Washington is an expert on the laws of war and has written extensively on Central America's civil conflicts, among other subjects. He stressed in an interview that international law has been slower to prohibit military abuses in domestic conflicts than in international conflicts, but he pointed out that Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 requires that civilians in time of domestic conflicts "shall in all circumstances be treated humanely." Ethiopia and Sudan both have signed the Geneva Conventions.

In 1977, an international convention known as Protocol II was devoted entirely, for the first time, to "the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts." Article 14 of Protocol II begins: "Starvation of civilians as a method of combat is prohibited."

The protocol goes on to say that it is against the law "to attack, destroy, remove or render useless, for that purpose, objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for the production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock" and so forth.

Neither Ethiopia nor Sudan has signed Protocol II. But Goldman, when asked whether starving one's own people was permissible for non-signers, replied: "I would make a strong argument, whether it's an insurgency or a full-blown rebellion, that today it's universally illegal."

Is starving one's enemies a type of genocide? Not necessarily. Genocide denotes a criminal plan to exterminate a people — a difficult charge to prove, Goldman said.

The use of starvation as a weapon is easier to prove, more common than genocide, and could stop well short of mass murder. For example, apart from killing people, the purposes of applied famine can include inconveniencing soldiers, demoralizing their civilian supporters, reminding them of the government's power, and forcing them to move.

JUN 2 6 1988

— Colin Campbell

Colin Campbell

Deborah Scroggins

Coming in this series

MONDAY: Deep inside southern Sudan, famine is devouring a proud black people called the Dinka. Most are pagans or Christians who oppose the government, which has sworn to turn Sudan's many tribes into one Islamic nation. To that end, the government is starving the Dinka and arming their tradtional enemies. In desperation, some Dinka families are selling their children into slavery to get money for food.

TUESDAY: The Ethiopian government claims that the distribution of emergency food "continues uninterrupted." That is not what people say across rebel-held Tigre province. There, a silent crowd of Ethiopians — their white shawls wrapped around them against the cool of the highlands — waits at night for rebel-supplied grain because to gather in the daylight is to risk attack by government warplanes.

The writers

Colin Campbell, 42, joined The Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 1987 to report on foreign affairs. Before that he was a free-lance writer and magazine editor, and for eight years worked at The New York Times as a reporter, foreign correspondent and member of the editorial board. In Addis Ababa in March, he asked the Ethiopian government for permission to cover the war and famine in the north from the government side, but was refused. Later he entered northern Ethiopia with a rebel food convoy from Sudan.

Deborah Scroggins, 26, worked until last fall as project director of the International Emergency Relief Project at the United Nations Association in New York. An Atlanta native, she received a B.A. degree from Tulane University and an M.A. in international affairs from Columbia University. She joined The Journal-Constitution as a reporter in November. She spent 10 weeks in the Horn of Africa.

JUN 2 0 1988

Terror and Hunger Spread As Sudan 'Holy War' Rages

By Deborah Scroggins
And Colin Campbell
Staff JUN. 27 1988

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KHARTOUM, Sudan — Deep inside southern Sudan, a famine is devouring a proud black people called the Dinka, who have lived by herding cattle for a thousand years.

This tall and graceful tribe once was famous for its egalitarian ways and its religious and artistic celebrations of cows. Now, every day, hundreds of shrunken, angry, frightened Dinka arrive as refugees in Ethiopia or northern Sudan. They say their home has become unlivable.

Other tribes, such as the Nuer, also have been afflicted, but the Dinka are the most numerous victims of the nearly hidden famine that has swept southern Sudan. The region's recurrent droughts have added to the misery, but the special tragedy of this famine is that it is largely man-made.

According to refugees, relief workers and other witnesses, the Sudanese government, the Sudanese army and other powerful forces here have been using hunger as a weapon. They have directed it not just against insurgent southerners, led by the Sudan People's Liberation Army, but also against civilians in the south, who, unlike the Moslem northerners, are black and either pagan or Christian.

The government's stated objective is to turn Sudan into a thoroughly Islamic nation, and in pursuit of this goal the Arab and Moslem authorities of the north have been arming tribal militias with modern weapons and letting them pursue their traditional enemies. Usually that means the Dinka, who total perhaps 3 million.

The combat that results is frequently one-sided. Militiamen with automatic rifles and grenades have been attacking farms and villages whose men are armed only with spears. The casualties have run into the thousands, and whole communities have been forced to flee their traditional lands. In the chaos, many southerners are starving. Government radio broadcasts have endorsed this process as "a jihad [holy war] against the pagans."

The struggle and the hunger have gone mostly unreported outside Sudan. One problem is that the Sudanese government has helped conceal the famine and its circumstances by expelling relief workers and keeping out journalists. Another problem is the U.S. government.

Sudan is a vast anti-communist country next door to Marxist Ethiopia, and Washington has been very quiet about what is happening in the south. It tends to view the conflict and starvation in terms of "tribal antagonisms," as one State Department official said, and bad weather.

Yet Washington this year is scheduled to give the Sudanese government more than $50 million in food aid, almost all of which will be channeled by the government into the north.

"We could do more if the donors would take a stand," a U.N. diplomat said, "but they are closing their eyes to the situation."

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"Villages have been burned, crops have been destroyed, and livestock has been taken north," said Douglas Johnson, an American scholar of Sudanese history who recently completed a report for the Minority Rights Group in London that is highly critical of the Sudanese authorities.

Johnson said provincial Sudanese officials have told visitors that the government of Prime Minister Sadiq Mahdi is using tribal militias in some areas, such as Bahr el-Gazal, to depopulate the countryside.

Their ultimate purpose, Johnson quoted these officials as saying, is to let northern Arabs take over Bahr el-Ghazal and ensure that the government will control any oil discovered there. Unlike much of the rest of Sudan, parts of the south are well-watered and rich in gold and, probably, oil.

Johnson's reports of such a conspiracy could not be confirmed. Yet it is clear that the government's militias have had the effect of forcing hundreds of thousands of Dinka off their lands.

Islamization has been the public policy of the Sudan government since the early 1980s. After its election in 1986, Mahdi's government promised to strengthen Islamic laws already in effect.

The Dinka, who have been active in the rebellion, and many other black southerners have opposed Islamization for centuries, but Mahdi seems determined to settle the question of Sudan's identity once and for all.

"All this talk about the 'identity' of Sudan," a diplomat quoted the Oxford-educated Mahdi as telling him one day. "I know what my identity is. I am an Arab. ... Most of the people in this country are Arabs. Why should my identity not be the identity of Sudan?"

Since the current civil war began in 1983, and particularly over the past two years, the government's tribal militias in some areas have grown more important than the regular army, which has tended to hunker down in a few garrison towns such as Juba and Wau.

In the southeast, tens of thousands of starving, traumatized refugees have fled to Ethiopia in recent months, according to the U.N. high commissioner for refugees. In the southwest, tens of thousands of other starving refugees have been showing up. Hundreds of miles apart, these refugees tell similar stories of murder, beatings, enslavement, destruction of crops, and theft of cattle by the militias.

Michael Priestly, the senior U.N. representative in Ethiopia, recently described the refugees who have been entering Ethiopia from southern Sudan as being in a "holocaust condition." He called them the worst cases he had seen in 30 years of relief work. Visitors to Darfur and Kordofan have seen equally emaciated victims.

Ring Rial, a Dinka chief from Bahr el-Ghazal province who recently led his people to a garrison called Safaha, in Darfur, told a typical tale. "After the Arabs went away, we were hungry and we went to another village. But the Arabs came against us, burning and killing," he said through an interpreter. "Finally there were no more villages to go to, and so we came here."

Unfortunately, their troubles did not end in Safaha. Most had no money for food or to buy a ticket farther north. And so hundreds, and possibly thousands, of adults were selling their children to Arabs. They said they sold the children not only to get money for their own escape, but to save their children from starving to death.

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The army and the government claim they are not responsible for these militia attacks. But Gen. Mohammed Zein, the army's chief of operations, and other officers admit to forming at least nine Arab and allied black militias since 1986 for "self-defense" against the rebels. The weapons the army is giving these anti-Dinka warriors include hand grenades and powerful automatic rifles such as Kalashnikovs.

For example, a black anti-Dinka tribe known as the Taposa, who live in Equatoria province near the Kenyan border, have received large stocks of weapons from the government. Westerners such as Egil Hagen, a Norwegian relief worker, and Kurt Lindyer, a Dutch journalist, who have recently visited the Taposa say that many Taposa men are so unaffected by the modern world that they wear no clothes, although they do carry Kalashnikovs.

Sudanese officials, critics insist, should have known before they armed the Taposa that they would use their new weapons against their traditional enemies. The Taposa have been implicated since in the massacre of civilians, many of whom had only spears to defend themselves.

The Taposa also have stolen large herds of cattle. They have an old belief that every cow in the world originally belonged to them, and relief workers say they see nothing wrong with killing people to retrieve their property.

"Until they got the machine guns, it just seemed like another quaint superstition," said a young British nutritionist who has worked

with them.

Another government militia draws it members from the Reizegaat, an Arab tribe based in Darfur. Like the Taposa, the Reizegaat have been raiding and burning Dinka villages.

In March, masses of starving Dinka in Safaha accused the Reizegaat of laying waste wide tracts of Bahr el-Ghazal. Some of the black southern refugees died soon after arriving in Safaha. Survivors said the Reizegaat had attacked their villages so often that they were forced to flee. The Reizegaat attacked them again as they tried to escape, torturing young men and taking women and children as slaves.

A pair of turbaned Reizegaat militiamen who were traveling south to report a runaway slave to the police nodded approvingly when asked about such charges. One touched his sword and said yes, "It is a jihad," a sacred struggle of Moslems against unbelievers.

Another tribal group the government has armed, the black Fertit, by February had killed more than 1,300 people, mainly Dinka, in the army-controlled town of Wau alone, according to Western aid officials who have acquired police reports of the slaughter.

The reports showed an average of 10 killings a day. Next to many of the victims' names the notation "cult" appeared, meaning that the body was found dismembered and disemboweled a sort of Fertit signature.

Two American relief workers expelled from Wau in October, Dick and Carol Steuart of Clarkston, Ga., said these militiamen enjoyed throwing government-supplied grenades at Dinka. "Hardly a night passed when we didn't hear one of these explosions," said Steuart, a 60-year-old missionary. Last August, regular Sudanese army soldiers in Wau joined the militia in the slaughter, and together they killed more than 150 Dinka in two days.

Two million to 3 million people in southern Sudan need emergency food now, according to U.N. and other estimates. As many as 2 million more have fled the south since 1984. An additional 300,000 southerners have managed to reach refugee camps in Ethiopia in the same period. All these victims together make up a large part of the south's total population of 5 million to 8 million.

The United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and many private relief agencies have been asking the government for years to let them distribute food and medicine to needy southerners. The government has responded with plans and promises, but in the end it has refused to let the relief agencies distribute food independently anywhere in the south except in the government's few garrison towns. This month, for example, the government publicly agreed to let the International Committee of the Red Cross distribute food throughout the south. According to news reports, however, no food has been distributed.

Only the army is allowed to distribute relief outside the towns, and its handouts cannot be monitored. The rebels, who have accused the army of using relief convoys to transport weapons, in the past have attacked army planes, trucks and barges that reportedly were carrying relief. Now the army avoids the countryside, and it has refused to let foreign relief workers take its place even at their own risk.

Complaints about this policy have yielded only punishments. In 1986, for example, the government expelled Winston Prattley, the special representative of U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, after Prattley criticized the government for not letting the United Nations carry food into the south in non-army convoys. There have been no such prominent complaints against Sudan's southern policy since.

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Early this year, various Sudanese authorities began holding up foreign-led relief even to southern towns controlled by the government, and in February it expelled four Christian relief organizations, including the American group World Vision, that had been working in the south. Other aid agencies, such as UNICEF and Medecins Sans Frontieres, have been pressured into pulling representatives out of Juba and Wau.

Many Western relief workers, including senior officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), have encountered other obstructive tactics. Relief shipments scheduled to go up the Nile in barges often have been sidelined by the army or by merchants in favor of more profitable commodities. Relief convoys are not allowed to travel without army protection. Even in tranquil places, the army can take months to arrange an escort.

The effect of such policies and delays is that most areas of the south receive no foreign food.

The types of foreign support that the two sides in the civil war have been getting have sharpened the government's inclination to see the war as a necessary struggle of far-reaching cultural, political and religious significance.

Libya is now the government's best source of weapons, Western military analysts say, and Sudan has called on Arab friends such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt to back its holy war against pagans. When the towns of Kurmuk and Gissan fell to the rebels early this year, Mahdi appealed to the whole Arab world to rush new weapons to Sudan, where Moslems, he said, had fallen under the rule of infidels.

To its Western friends, Sudan portrays the war as a struggle between communism and freedom, between Soviet interests and Western and independent interests. Government officials refer to the rebels, who get much of their support from Ethiopia, as "communists" and "foreign infiltrators."

The Reagan administration, which has condemned Ethiopia for blocking relief efforts, has said almost nothing about Khartoum's responsibility for the famine in southern Sudan.

Chester Crocker, assistant secretary of state in charge of African affairs, said in an interview that Sudan and Ethiopia have such radically different governments that they must be treated differently.

Crocker agreed that the United States has said more in public about Ethiopia than about Sudan. The reason: "We can talk," he said. "We can solve problems" with Sudan, which he described as "much more fair and open" than Ethiopia.

But he insisted, "We've not hid our concern on any occasion." As evidence, he cited the department's annual human rights report, which contains information about rights abuses in Sudan but only hints at a link between famine and government policy.

U.S. officials admit that little American-donated food is reaching the south. Janice Weber, the AID officer in charge of the Horn of Africa, and Richard Hough, an AID program officer for Africa, said that the "security situation," "tribal warfare" and the fact that "you cannot go on the roads" explained why little U.S. food was reaching the south. Ms. Weber agreed that the Sudanese government had sometimes delayed food convoys and given priority to the transport of other commodities, but she argued that the blame should be shared by both sides.

When asked, however, how much U.S. food aid has been provided by the Sudanese government to 2 million refugees from the south who have trekked into secure, government-run areas of the north, the American officials said they did not know. Hough guessed that the figure was very small, "not exceeding 1,000 tons."

He was asked if the Sudanese government was using hunger as a weapon. "I don't think I should comment on that," Hough replied.

Some relief experts say they are haunted by the thought that the starvation in southern Sudan may kill hundreds of thousands of people and uproot millions before the world notices what is happening and gets food to the hungry.

Other relief experts do not want to upset Khartoum. They say that if they mute their criticisms, the Sudanese government will grow more cooperative. "We think we are seeing some signs of progress," one U.S. official said. It would be bad timing, the official reasoned, to embarrass Sudan now.

Meanwhile, the famine in southern Sudan is becoming more insistent.

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Carol Berger, a Canadian reporter for The Independent, a London daily, a few weeks ago managed to reach the Sudanese town of Abiye in southern Kordofan, where several thousand southern refugees had reportedly gathered a few months earlier.

Ms. Berger and her traveling companions, inspectors for Western relief agencies, found the place teeming with 20,000 sick, emaciated Dinka refugees, and more were arriving every day.

"They were walking skeletons," said Ms. Berger, who has covered Sudan for seven years. "I was told that the night before we arrived in Abiye, between 10 and 15 people had died."

They had been attacked, she said, by the militia of a local Arab tribe, the Missiriya. The Sudanese army had supplied the Missiriya with weapons.

U.S. officials at a high level have been briefed about Abiye, and they have seen reports that an additional 10,000 hungry southerners have poured into two other towns in the area. But State Department officials, quoting a June 1 cable from the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, said in interviews that the situation was under control.

One official quoted the cable on the subject of hungry refugees: "Fortunately, the regional government has also seen the need and has sent grain to all three towns already."

Striking another positive note, the cable said the refugees would be cared for by agencies such as UNICEF, Medecins Sans Frontieres and Irish Concern. But, in fact, these agencies had visited the area just a few days earlier — for the first time in months — and watched helplessly as people starved.

The cable was said to have added: "Abiye is a more delicate situation because of security concerns."

A U.S. official said Washington could not be sure of all the details because no American officials had visited Abiye. "But apparently the needs are being met," the official said.

It is unclear whether even the southern rebels fully comprehend the tragedy that has engulfed their people.

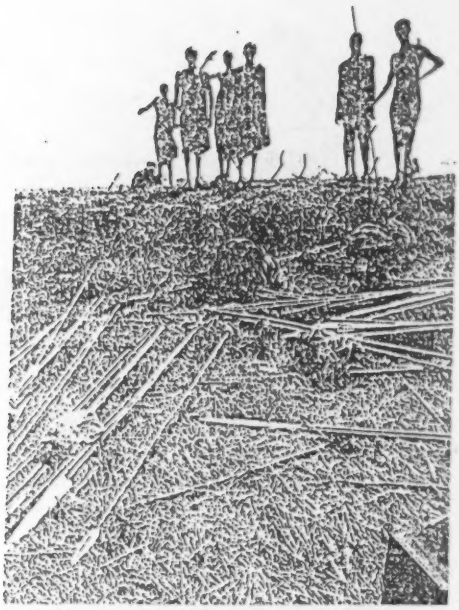
The rebels have been riding high recently, capturing important towns. Meanwhile, starving civilians are abandoning the region.

An old friend of John Garang, the rebels' American-educated Dinka leader, remembers warning him this spring, "Don't you see what is happening?

"In our part of the country," Garang's friend said about their common homeland, "we find broken pieces of pottery in the ground. Some say a people called the Malag made them, but no one knows for certain. Where are those people now? Some people think they died. Some people say they went to Central Africa hundreds of years ago."

He told Garang, "Someday they will say that about the Dinka if this goes on."

Garang replied that he would rather die than live as a second-class citizen in an Arabized and Islamized Sudan.



OSWALD ITEN/Black Star

Shilluk tribesmen in southern Sudan use spears against militiamen armed with modern weapons.

Life and death struggle on a train

Mary Awatch lives in the third railway car from the front of the train.

The Dinka woman looked out of the same open window from which, a year earlier, she had watched a man shoot and kill two of her children, during the massacre at Dhein in southern Sudan.

Mrs. Awatch was among a group of 50 Dinka living in the train (left). They were interviewed in March for the first time since the massacre. They made their escape on the train and have been living in it ever since.

The attack by Reizegaat militia began March 26, 1987 at the railway station in Dhein. It was in retaliation for an attack on the army garrison at Safaha by the Sudan People's Liberation Army. The Dinka are principal supporters of the rebel group.

After burning down the only church in Dhein, the militiamen rounded up more than 6,000 black pagan and Christian Dinka refugees and herded them into the railway station, firing rifles into the crowd.

By chance, an empty train was sitting on the tracks. Some of the Dinka refugees tried to save themselves by climbing into the train. The enraged Reizegaat set fire to it.

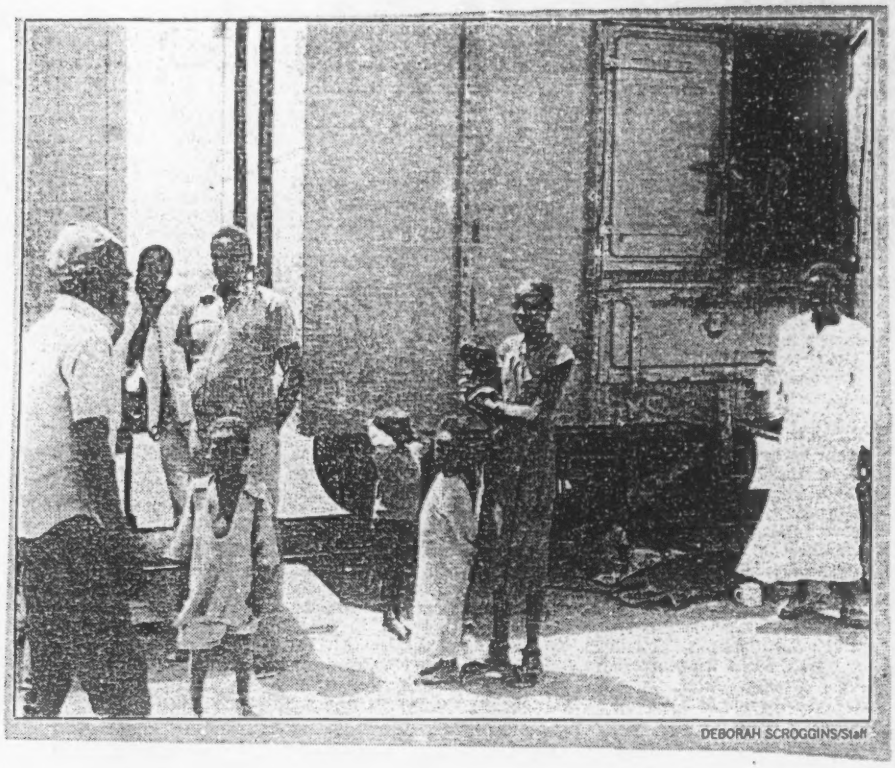
The Dinka inside the first cars burned to death. The lucky ones in the other 10 cars got the train started with the help of some railroad workers. They drove the train to Nyala (above), a town about 50 miles away.

The Dhein massacre caused a short-lived political tempest in Khartoum, the capital. The government sent three investigators to Dhein for a day. The investigators reported 228 casualties.

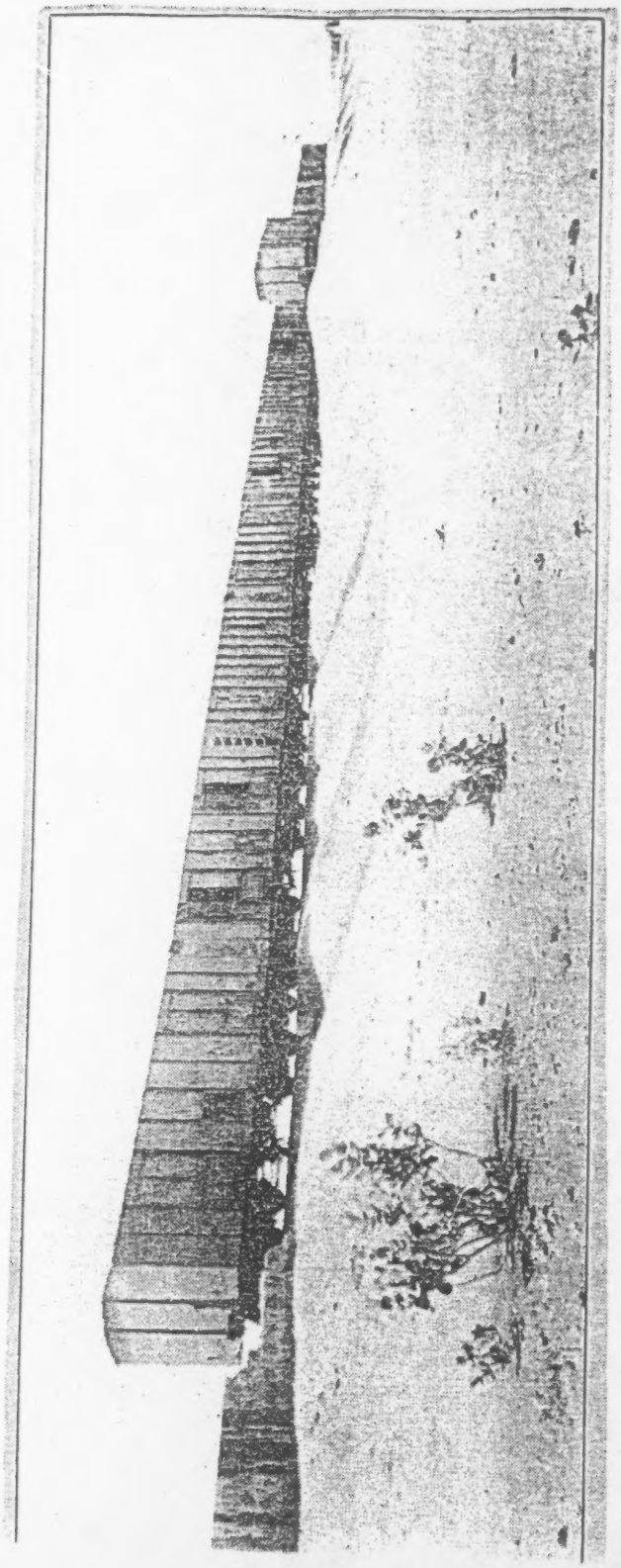
Two University of Khartoum professors, Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud and Suleyman Ali Baldo, conducted an independent study. They concluded that more than 1,000 Dinka had been killed and some 3,000 Dinka children had been taken into slavery between March 26 and 27. Mrs. Awatch said another of her children, a girl, disappeared in the confusion of the attack, and she never saw her again.

JUN 2 7 1988

—Deborah Scroggins



DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff



DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff

For the Dinka, no escape from the misery

Dinka tribesmen who escape from the famine in southern Sudan find new miseries waiting for them in the north.

One woman (above right, top) wove mats for a month at Safaha, a refugee camp in southern Darfur province, to earn her fare to the town of Dhein. But authorities at Dhein refused to let her and hundreds of other refugees enter the town, so they sat outside without food, water or shelter. This woman's brother was considering selling one of his children to pay for the family's tickets to Nyala, a bigger town about 50 miles away.

To escape Dhein, some families climbed on top of trains bound for Khartoum. But many children were too weak for the long, hot journey and they died. Others were kidnapped by Arab raiders who attacked the trains in search of slaves, according to wire-service reports.

Most of the estimated 2 million southern refugees who have managed to reach the outskirts of northern cities huddle together in flimsy huts such as these at the Hela-Shok encampment (right) on top of a garbage dump outside Khartoum. The huts are made out of empty grain sacks, bits of cardboard and other refuse. The crowded, dirty camps breed disease. The baby boy (top, left) lives in a Dinka camp outside Nyala called Jiira. His mother begged a visitor to get him medicine. He was going blind, and she had no money to take him to a doctor.

—Deborah Scroggins

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DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff

These police officers in Nyala, Sudan, refused earlier this year to let journalists travel to Safaha, a refugee camp where tens of thousands of starving and dispossessed members of the Dinka tribe had gathered.

Sudan Uses Campaign of Intimidation To Hide Its Starving From the World

JUN 2 7 1988

By Deborah Scroggins
Staff Writer

The Sudanese government has helped conceal the extent of the famine in southern Sudan by closing most of the south to foreign journalists and threatening relief workers who help reporters.

Journalists said they often are denied visas to enter Sudan, and if they do get visas, they sometimes are denied internal travel permits. Relief workers and others suspected of aiding journalists have been detained, questioned, threatened with expulsion and in some cases expelled.

Some examples of the difficulties:

■ A British free-lance journalist who in March tried to interview refugees in Safaha was arrested and imprisoned soon after his arrival, and his notes and photographs were destroyed.

■ Doctors working for Medecins Sans Frontieres in Darfur were told in March by police that they would be expelled if they helped a reporter. The doctors had been trying to save the lives of dying children.

■ An Atlanta Journal-Constitution reporter received a telephone death threat after the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) broadcast her published accounts of Safaha. The story included eyewitness reports of how government-enslaved and dispossessed hungry blacks from the south.

■ Dick and Carol Steuart, a couple from Clarkston, Ga., who worked in southern Sudan before they and their aid agency were expelled, were accused by the Sudanese army of telling the BBC about a massacre of 150 to 200 refugees in Wau that had been carried out by the army and a government militia. The army seized the Steuarts' radio transmitter and harassed them in other ways.

■ Last month three men, variously identified as Libyans, Lebanese or Palestinians, bombed the Acropole Hotel, the unofficial headquarters in Khartoum of foreign relief workers and journalists. Seven people were killed and 21 were injured. The attackers also machine-gunned The Sudan Club, which is frequented by Westerners.

Many Sudanese officials, nationalists and Islamic activists see Western aid workers and journalists as anti-Arab, anti-Islamic, pro-Christian, pro-Dinka and bent on exposing secrets.

Sudanese police told reporters that the suspects arrested in the hotel and club attacks confessed to striking at "British and American interests." Authorities said the prisoners claimed that the hotel's guests were "using their humanitarian work as a cover for

Ethiopia Using Food as Tactic in Rebel War

By Colin Campbell
Staff
JUN 2 8 1988
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AXUM, Ethiopia — It was nighttime, and the obelisks that for centuries made this city famous cast black shadows under the moon. A few blocks away, a silent crowd of Ethiopians — their white shawls wrapped around them against the cool of the highlands — stood with the dignity of monuments, and they looked almost as ghostly. They were waiting to be given a portion of emergency grain.

They had assembled at night because they were afraid to assemble during the day. Two Ethiopian government MiGs had used the daylight a few hours earlier to rocket the town's airstrip, and the noise had made some residents nearly hysterical. So the rebels who have occupied this hungry region of northern Ethiopia since March distributed the food at night.

Like much of the north, this area of Tigre province has suffered at least two assaults on its food supplies in the past year. Last summer, the rains failed and most of the crops died. Then something just as bad happened. Though mountains of foreign food were quickly sent to Ethiopia to fend off the sort of hunger that killed hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians four years ago, the Ethiopian government blocked the food from entering rebellious areas, where most of the north's 5 million to 6 million people live.

Waiting for the rebels' distribution to begin, a group of men and women were asked if they had received any emergency aid from the Ethiopian government or from the United Nations since the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) captured Axum a month earlier. No, they said.

Had they seen any government food before then, when Axum was still under government control? No, they said. Or very little.

That is what people say across much of the north.

THE FAMINE WEAPON IN THE HORN OF AFRICA
Third of Three Articles

Facing provincial rebellions in Tigre and Eritrea, the government claims that it has kept international food convoys out of the war zone because the rebels might steal the food or the trip might be dangerous.

But people here say they do not believe the government's arguments.

They say, if only privately, that President Mengistu Haile Mariam is trying to hurt the rebels any way he can, even if it means starving out civilians. They have heard his messages on the radio. On March 31, for instance, he damned the rebels and promised "not only to wipe them out but also to teach an unforgettable lesson" to future generations.

Untold thousands of tons of donated food are now heaped on the edges of the drought zone. But the government will not let the International Committee of the Red Cross and other agencies carry it across the government's military lines.

The people in rebel territory could walk to the food, and some have done so. But the walk can be a long one, and there has been sharp fighting near the government's strongholds. Many people have been walking the other way.

If the government would let the relief agencies cross the government's lines, the hunger in dusty northern Ethiopia might be no worse than in other parts of the country where drought has devastated local crops, but where imported food has prevented famine.

"The simple fact is that the food does not come through," said an embittered relief expert in Adigrat. The expert, who asked not to be named for fear the government might retake the town and punish him, has no connection with the Ti-

grean rebels.

And what of the government's claim to be relieving the north?

"That's just a lie," said the relief expert.

An Ethiopian official in Addis Ababa, the capital, admitted that the food might be obstructed. "It will affect the hungry people, there is no doubt," said Teklu Tabor of the Information Ministry. "But what is one to do?"

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The evidence that food is being used as a weapon includes:

■ Government limitations on distribution of food even before the expulsion of the aid workers.

■ The government's recent public threat to attack any trucks, including relief trucks, supplying rebel territory via Sudan.

■ The government's often-reported demands that, before receiving emergency food, the hungry must pay their back taxes, join the army, or resettle in another province.

■ Government restrictions on foreign journalists and the flow of information.

Many foreign observers have declined to criticize the Ethiopian government and have argued that what Ethiopia does to its people is its own business.

Washington is one capital that has criticized Ethiopia. President Reagan said in a speech April 21 that he was coming to "the horrible conclusion that starvation and scorched earth are being considered as weapons." Richard Williamson, assistant secretary of state for international organizational affairs, said later at the United Nations that some U.N. members "must face the issue of whether to remain mute and blind in the presence of actions which starve an innocent population."

The moral force of Washington's position, however, has been diluted, critics say, by U.S. silence about the famine in southern Sudan, which has also been aggravated by government policies and which appears to be killing people. Sudan, unlike Marxist Ethiopia, is a friend of the United States.

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An Ethiopian diplomat at the United Nations wrote to The New York Times earlier this month saying it was "preposterous" of the newspaper's editorial page to have accused Mengistu of appearing "bent on starving some two million people."

"The Ethiopian government," wrote the diplomat, Keflyalew Gebremedhin, "has neither the intention of starving its own people, nor is it using food as a means of settling insurgency problems." He said his government's withdrawal of foreign relief workers from the north "has not affected distribution of relief" and that the "distribution continues uninterrupted."

Neither Western relief workers nor visitors to northern Ethiopia agree with that assessment.

"If you look at a map, there's nowhere to go," said a longtime international aid official in Addis Ababa. He indicated the government stronghold of Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, as a starting point. "You can't go north — there's a war going on. And now that the government has abandoned Adigrat, they won't let you down that road. And now that Axum is taken, you can't go down that road."

A senior U.N. official in New York agreed. He said the foreign food controlled by the Ethiopian government is being handed out only in government-held areas.

It is even clearer in the rebellious highlands of northern Ethiopia that foreign food shipments are not getting through. In Tigre, for instance, from the Sudanese border in the west to Adigrat and Wukro in the east, in dirt-poor mountain villages and sophisticated towns, interviews with scores of people now living under the control of the TPLF disclosed that no food has entered the area from the government side since late March, when a single U.N. convoy was allowed by the government to drive to Wukro.

There are significant, though inadequate, stores of emergency grain in Tigre. Much of it is controlled by the rebels. Some of the grain has been trucked in from Sudan along precipitous mountain roads in long, dusty convoys of big Fiat and Mercedes trucks, and some of it was abandoned by the United Nations, the International Red Cross, the Ethiopian government and others when the government's troops retreated and ordered foreigners to leave the area.

The Tigrean rebels' own relief workers were seen distributing food in several places. But they did not have enough, and supplies in the towns were running low.

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No one in rebel territory appeared to be dying from starvation, but large numbers of people, especially in the desiccated central highlands and among the poor of the towns, looked scrawny

and malnourished. Thousands of people were on the move: walking northward in their shawls from Wukro, driving their cattle before them in the moonlight, after Wukro was bombed by the Ethiopian air force; trudging west at 2 a.m. along the wild mountain road that links Adigrat and Adowa; squeezing into a Land-Rover in Axum after an air attack, and roaring off.

The rebels in Tigre and Eritrea keep accusing the government of intentionally bombing civilians who have gathered to get food. The charge may sound far-fetched, but one Western relief administrator said that the government refused to let him move one of his food distribution centers a bit farther outside a northern town to feed more people. A government relief official explained that a big crowd of people could draw fire from a government MiG.

The drought is certainly not total. Western Tigre is better off than the central highlands, and now the highlands have begun getting rain. But the foreign food has not been coming from the government, and the director of field operations for the rebels' relief group, a man known only as Teklewaine, claimed that a half-million people had moved west into the Simien mountains.

A nervous, tired man, Teklewaine said his rebel aid agency, the Relief Society of Tigre, has been feeding nearly 200,000 of these refugees. The rebels also claim to have assumed responsibility for an additional 200,000 people when they captured a half-dozen major towns earlier this year.

But the rebels still lack the food to feed them.

There is so much foreign food, including Soviet-supplied food, stored in Ethiopian ports and garrisons that it is doubtful the Ethiopian government would need to steal American food to feed its soldiers, an official of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) recently told a group of congressmen in Washington.

His point apparently reassured some people. But no one really knows what is happening to the food, another AID spokesman said. Practically all foreign relief workers and American officials have been barred from the north since early April.

The Ethiopian government has argued that the north is too dangerous. In fact, apart from attacks by government warplanes, one can travel the north for weeks and encounter few things more dangerous than bad water.

There were mines in the slippery gravel highway west of Enda Selassie, but the rebels have marked them with stones. Elsewhere, rebel relief trucks, jeeps and pickups rumbled over the province's roads at night with complete impunity. During the daytime, they hid their vehicles under trees and tarpaulins.

The region is under the full military control of the TPLF, a secretive Marxist-Leninist group that has been fighting for autonomy and the overthrow of the Mengistu government since the mid-1970s. The rebels say they will survive any new government offensive even if they are forced to relinquish some of their newly captured towns, and most observers think it unlikely that Mengistu will wipe them out. Indeed, he faces more than the Tigreans. A second and much larger rebel army, the separatists in Eritrea, has been battling the central government for 27 years.

The Tigrean rebels recently struck a deal with the main Eritrean rebel force, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, to let Tigrean rebel trucks travel Eritrean rebel roads. Field officers for the Tigreans' relief organization were very excited about this arrangement. They said it would let them truck in food from Sudan even in the rainy season, which makes their normal routes impassable.

With such possibilities in mind and because of the obstacles the Ethiopian government has posed, officials in Washington have been discussing a major increase in the covert food aid that the U.S. government has been giving to the Ethiopian rebels. This aid, an open secret, passes through a consortium of church groups that includes the American aid agency Lutheran World Relief.

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"How is it possible, how is it imaginable that a government which came to power by the will of the people can be accused of using food as a weapon?" Mengistu wondered out loud at an extraordinary six-hour news conference May 31.

The government calls it slander to accuse Ethiopians of letting Ethiopians suffer, and Western aid workers testify that thousands of Ethiopian citizens working for the government's Relief and Rehabilita-

tion Commission, for the Ethiopian Red Cross, and for other government-controlled agencies are thoroughly dedicated.

Yet Ethiopians concede that the real power is held by Mengistu, who is not only president and military chief but also head of the country's sole political party, which oversees the government's relief agencies. Mengistu is feared widely for his ruthlessness even within the government, and he is reported to have personally shot people who displeased him.

One popular army officer whose performance did not measure up, Brig. Gen. Tariku Yayne, was executed in front of his troops in February. So were a number of colonels. Amnesty International has published detailed accounts of the regime's "widespread" and "routine" torture, its summary executions and "disappearances," and the jailing of thousands of suspected political opponents. Many specialists consider the Mengistu government one of the world's worst violators of human rights.

Mengistu is seen as deeply suspicious; and in the same style his news agency announced two months ago that the respected International Red Cross was "at the forefront of those which have been directly or indirectly supporting separatist bandits attempting to dismember our country."

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Some diplomats sympathize with the Ethiopian government's predicament. They view the north's hungry civilians as victims of a tragic "cross fire" between combatants who are fated to fight on till death or victory.

The cross-fire argument is intuitively compelling, yet the relief policies of rebels and government remain quite different.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front announced last fall after destroying a convoy of 20-plus international food trucks that its fighters would refrain from attacking such convoys so long as the agencies gave the rebels notice and the convoys were marked clearly and included no government vehicles. The Tigre People's Liberation Front has the same policy.

The government claimed that the rebels had destroyed 110 relief trucks. "We gave priority to save the lives of our people in that part of the country," said Teklu Tabor of the Information Ministry, "but they burned our relief trucks — more than 100 of them." The rebels have been condemned by the United Nations for these attacks.

But there is another view of these blown-up Ethiopian trucks — and questions about what they were carrying. "Certainly," a U.N. official in Addis Ababa said, "not many of those 110 trucks were carrying relief."

Foreign relief workers reported before their expulsion from the north that the Ethiopian army commandeered more than 400 such trucks and turned them into military supply vehicles.

Another U.N. relief official noted of the Tigrean rebels, "The TPLF has destroyed *none* of our food trucks."

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Mengistu's steadiest line of defense is that Ethiopia's sovereignty is at stake. The northern rebels have threatened to secede from the country or topple the regime. Most foreign countries recognize the regime and consider Ethiopia's borders fixed. The government has decided to strike back firmly, as any government would, and it rejects the demands of various foreign, white, professional humanitarians that Addis Ababa let them roam the insurgent countryside dispensing wheat and sympathy.

The question is where to draw the line. The famine of four years ago was one of the deadliest in decades. If people start dying again as they did in 1984, a U.S. official wondered, where will sovereignty stop and genocide begin?

"That debate is not taking place in the United States," the diplomat said.

Senior officials at the United Nations are privately pessimistic about changing Mengistu's mind.

"The government appears to be completely locked into a position," a senior U.N. official said. "They really feel that the world is against them and to hell with the outside." He described "an all-pervasive gloomy aura that comes out of Ethiopia right now."

The government is expected to launch a major attack on the rebels soon, and the north is now entering the worst phase of its food cycle. "It's going to be tough," the U.N. official said. "We expect that as the famine grows there will be an influx of people" into government-held

towns.

The official strongly suggested, however, that it no longer made sense to try to badger Mengistu into letting the United Nations take food into rebel areas.

"We, the U.N., could not do that," he explained. "This is what the Red Cross was doing, and they chased them out."

In public, the United Nations has sounded almost upbeat. Officials have told reporters that the relief effort is going well, that transport planes are ferrying food again, and that there is still hope of negotiating a better deal. Their comments have been duly published.

Others remain pessimistic. Commenting on U.N. progress, Chester Crocker, assistant secretary of state for African affairs, said, "So far, we see only very modest steps."

A Western-educated relief expert in Adigrat said of the U.N. negotiators, "They're weak, they've no spine. In terms of their moral fiber — poof."

He said that when the government still occupied Adigrat a few months ago, its Relief and Rehabilitation Commission used to hand over food to the army.

"And most of that food came from the United Nations," he said.

□□□

The United Nations has less influence in Ethiopia than several other outsiders do, yet no outside power has found the will or means to reverse what is widely described as the intentional use of hunger.

The Soviets, for example, have supported the Mengistu government with so much military aid — $500 million worth a year, on average, according to James Cheek, the U.S. charge d'affaires in Addis Ababa — that Ethiopia now has the biggest army in black Africa. Ethiopia is also unusual, Crocker said, in having "not only Cuban but Soviet combat troops."

The Cubans are even aiding the Ethiopian-backed rebellion in southern Sudan, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution has learned. Cubans have been training Sudanese rebels in underwater demolition, among other skills, and some graduates came close to blowing up a key government bridge this spring.

The Soviets are known to disagree with the way Mengistu has handled the economy and other matters, and Washington has asked Moscow to get him to soften his relief policies. But there is no evidence that Moscow pushed very hard.

□□□

Other nations are also deeply involved in Ethiopia, and not in charitable ways.

Saudi Arabia and some of its Arab friends have been reported in U.S. government documents to be providing support to the rebels in Eritrea and Tigre. These rebels are mostly Marxists, but they have the virtue in conservative Arab eyes of keeping Ethiopia's large communist state off balance. If Mengistu felt secure, they reason, he might be spreading revolution across the Red Sea, renewing war against Somalia, which is a member of the Arab League, or pulverizing Eritrea, half of whose people are Moslems.

The Reagan administration has considered giving Ethiopia's rebels more than food aid, but by most accounts it has rejected the idea. One drawback is said to be that the most effective rebels in Eritrea and Tigre are Marxists and that supporting them would not mesh with the Reagan doctrine of aiding anti-Soviet guerrillas.

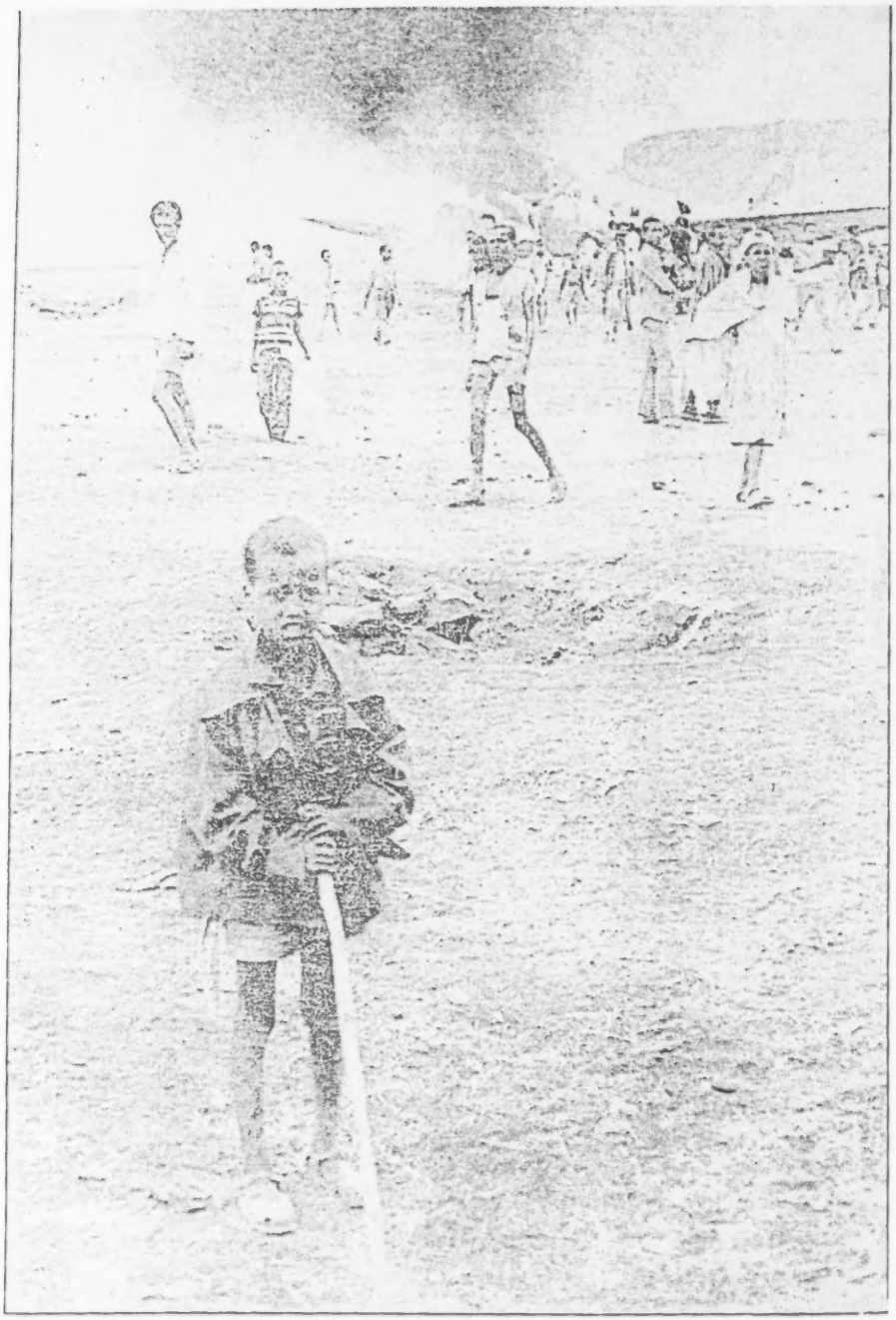
Crocker and others in the administration deny that the United States supports any Ethiopian rebels. They say Washington wants Ethiopia to remain in one piece. On the other hand, some specialists in the CIA and elsewhere in the government want to see the Ethiopian rebels get more aid. According to Bob Woodward's book "Veil," the late William Casey as CIA director was "grateful" for the aid that Saudi Arabia gave the resistance.

Historians have pointed out that some of the deadliest disasters of modern times — including the famine in the Ukraine in the early 1930s that killed millions of people — were largely the result of ruthless policies, ignorant agricultural theories, government cover-ups, foreign diplomatic miscalculations, and the inability or unwillingness of the press to publicize the facts.

A wide range of evidence suggests that some of these factors are at work in the Horn of Africa today. But it is easier to talk about the weather.

COLIN CAMPBELL/Staff

An official of the Tigre People's Liberation Front talks with children in Adigrat, Ethiopia, which the rebels captured from government troops three months ago.



COLIN CAMPBELL/Staff

An airliner burns amid a crowd at an airstrip in Axum, Ethiopia, after two government MiGs attacked it with rockets. The assault apparently was intended to prevent its future use by rebels.

U.S. voices

Richard Williamson

Chester Crocker

JUN 2 8 1988

Assistant Secretary of State Richard Williamson said of Ethiopia, which has been accused of spreading hunger: 'There comes a time when quiet diplomacy is not enough and you have to raise your voice.'

Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker said of Sudan, which has also been charged with spreading hunger: 'It isn't comparable to Ethiopia. . . . I don't think there are any areas of commonality.'

COLIN CAMPBELL/Staff

A huge painting of Ethiopian president Mengistu Haile Mar- [illegible] on a wall in Axum, a town controlled by rebels.

On the road with the rebels

JUN 2 8 1988

Life on the roads of rebel-held northern Ethiopia is a life on trucks packed with emergency food traveling through clouds of dust. Quiet men and smiling women all carry guns.

These guerrillas (top and right) are guarding grain being hauled into Tigre province in big Fiat and Mercedes trucks donated by Western governments and charities. The smuggled grain — which travels by the same sorts of secret routes into neighboring Eritrea — is the only food that many of the north's 5 to 6 million people have seen in months, and they have not seen enough.

The region was stricken with a drought last summer. The world responded by sending food, but the Ethiopian government expelled most of the foreign relief workers and is now distributing food only to people under the government's full military control.

The rocky roads are fiendish, and they chop up tires. The convoys travel at night. These pictures were taken just before dark, as a convoy from Sudan ended a day's rest in the Kaza River gorge and started into the highlands, heading east toward the heart of Tigre.

Many fighters of the Tigre People's Liberation Front are women, and several women have become officers of provincial fame. They strike a visitor as amazingly cheerful, patient and competent.

The women, like the men, go through a process of Marxist political education as well as military training. People do not enter the TPLF on impulse, rebels say. For a while, the women were also expected to postpone sex and marriage, but the rules are said to have loosened up.

Why all the firepower deep in rebel-held territory? "Infiltrators," the guerrillas replied. But on the whole the food convoys seem quite safe, and the government's argument that it has kept foreign relief workers out of rebel territory to protect them from rebels makes little sense to people living in the neighborhood.

— Colin Campbell

Articles on Famine in Sudan Spurred Aid That Saved Lives

By Colin Campbell
Staff JUL 2 9 1988

The Reagan administration has said almost nothing about the famine in southern Sudan or the role of the Sudanese government in making the famine much worse.

By contrast, many U.S. officials have spoken out about hunger and the related abuse of human rights in Marxist Ethiopia. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Williamson said recently that the United States had helped save lives there "merely by our raising the issue."

Even the limited inquiry of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution supplies an example of how publicity can quickly save lives.

At the end of March, staff writer Deborah Scroggins traveled to the town of Safaha in western Sudan. She found thousands of starving southerners there, and some were dying. They told her they had been attacked and that their food was taken by one of the government's numerous militias.

A few harried European aid workers were trying to save these victims, but the Sudanese authorities — who earlier had arrested and imprisoned a journalist at Safaha — ordered the Europeans to take no photographs.

The relief workers from Oxfam, a British relief agency, were getting ready to evacuate Safaha because heavy rains would soon isolate the whole area. They wanted to evacuate the refugees as well, so they could continue feeding them, but they had no trucks.

Ms. Scroggins returned to Khartoum in early April and described what she had seen to several foreign relief officials — one of whom, Jan van Manen of UNICEF, soon went to see for himself. After Ms. Scroggins' articles appeared and became the topic of three BBC broadcasts, UNICEF and two other organizations gave Oxfam the money to get the trucks. Oxfam officials said that by May 1 they had trucked more than 16,000 hungry southern refugees out of Safaha and settled them in safer camps.

Other articles we have published about the African famine in 1988

Relief workers leaving war-torn Ethiopia area

MAR 0 8 1988

By Colin Campbell
Staff Writer

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has instructed eight of its employees to fly out of northern Ethiopia today after a government order that all Western and international relief agencies should evacuate their foreign personnel from the region "immediately" and hand over their food and equipment to the government.

"People are going to die," predicted an angry ICRC official, Vincent Bernard.

The Ethiopian Red Cross and the government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, which plan to assume responsibility for a gigantic international relief effort, simply do not have the capacity to handle such a crisis, Bernard said. The relief effort has been trying to feed more than 2 million people who are threatened with famine.

Roughly 10 percent of about 7 million people in Tigre and Eritrea live in areas that are fully controlled by the government, Western diplomats and relief officials said. The rest of the population live in areas sometimes controlled by two guerrilla armies. Therefore, millions of people often are beyond the government's reach.

The government had told the aid organizations that civil war in the north made the region unsafe for foreigners.

A loose consortium of foreign charities and relief agencies is attempting to distribute more than 1 million tons of food this year in order to avoid the kind of mass starvation that killed an estimated 1 million people during the great 1984-85 famine.

When asked what the ICRC planned to do with thousands of tons of food and about 60 vehicles that it owns in the north, Bernard replied that his organization would refuse the government's order to turn them over.

If the organization had no other choice, Bernard said the ICRC would paint over the Red Cross emblems on its vehicles before delivering them to the government. It also might lock up its warehouses full of food, he said.

The U.S. government has donated 7,000 tons of food to the ICRC for distribution in Ethiopia this year, according to the American Embassy here.

Neither the embassy nor the ICRC could say whether any of the food was included in the ICRC's stockpiles in the north.

As war, famine take their grisly toll, misery slowly envelops Africa's Sudan

By Deborah Scroggins
Staff Writer

MAR 2 7 1988

KHARTOUM, Sudan — This vast, impoverished country has been falling apart for years, but now drought, famine and civil war all have swept across the land, as they have swept over neighboring Ethiopia, and millions of people face starvation.

On a sunbaked eastern plain, refugees from northern Ethiopia tell tales of withered crops, of savage fighting between government and rebel troops, of international food aid that cannot be delivered, and of hundreds of thousands of people wandering the countryside looking for something to eat.

Another exodus of starving Ethiopians soon could be streaming toward Sudan, as in the great famine of a few years ago. This time the government of this desperately poor nation of 25 million says it will keep them out.

In the south, which is usually moist and fertile, a growing civil war has led to massacres, a general breakdown of law and order, and the reported revival of slavery. Most recently, according to government officials and the horrified accounts of foreigners, war and drought have left several million people in need of food.

In the arid western provinces of Darfur and Kordofan, the Great Sahara keeps creeping south, as it has for decades, and the drought has destroyed crops and left 1.75 million people dependent on emergency food. Starving southern tribesmen, their children's arms no thicker than crayons, meanwhile are pouring into major towns by the hundreds every day.

Here in this dusty Islamic capital, where the White Nile meets the Blue Nile, thousands of displaced Sudanese from the south keep drifting into squalid, stinking shantytowns, some built on garbage dumps, that ring Khartoum.

Even in the best neighborhoods the telephones, schools and electrical system all seem to be disintegrating. Daily temperatures have risen lately to 110 degrees in the shade and, to make matters worse, a meningitis epidemic has killed at least 300 people, according to the government's latest figures — or as many as 3,000, according to the guesses of foreign aid workers.

Sudan's terrible suffering is caused as much by the region's political troubles as by drought. The famine, in turn, has deepened Khartoum's sense of political malaise. The last famine helped topple the regime of President Gaafar Nimeiri. Now an elected prime minister, Sadaq Mahdi, is in charge of Africa's largest country. Even Sudanese officials speak of the government as on a razor's edge.

Envying Ethiopian refugees

For the moment, the eastern border seems to be under control.

Vast camps grew up there during the Ethiopian famine of 1984-85, and 677,000 Ethiopians still live in Sudan. The camps — grass huts in the middle of a burning desert — are still in place, and many of their inhabitants suffer from tuberculosis, malaria and the sort of diarrhea that kills children.

Most of the attempts by relief agencies to make the camps self-sufficient have failed. The problems are many. There is never enough money and supplies are always short. Transportation systems always are breaking down.

The refugees are miserable — and yet Sudan is so poor that the local Sudanese sometimes envy the Ethiopians. The government cannot always afford the kinds of schools and clinics run by foreign aid workers for refugees. Moreover, the Ethiopian refugees' living conditions are sometimes better than those among displaced Sudanese.

More than a third of the people in Port Sudan, Kassala, Gedaref and other eastern towns are Ethiopians, and the Sudanese townsmen have come to resent them, too. Officials fear that another influx could set off a domestic crisis, and Khartoum announced last October that it would accept no more.

A great many more, however, soon may appear at the border, say international aid officials. The Ethiopian provinces of Eritrea and Tigre are suffering from their own terrible drought and are embroiled in their own civil war. The fighting has grown much sharper in recent months and now is preventing emergency food aid from reaching the hungry.

Several hundred thousand Tigreans are reportedly on the move in search of food, and U.N. and other officials estimate that 7 million Ethiopians are threatened by famine. After similar predictions in 1984, hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians crossed into Sudan's unprepared eastern provinces.

Outside Wad Kowli, on the border southeast of Gedaref, about 2,500 Eritreans and Tigreans were seen last week lurking about in hopes of receiving asylum. A few others — 10 or 20 a day — have been slipping into Sudan without registering, relief workers said.

Ten such illegal aliens said in

interviews that they had seen many hungry people on their trek toward Sudan. They said "everyone" in Ethiopia wants to leave.

These refugees were not emaciated, and they talked more about their opposition to the Ethiopian government than about hunger. But relief workers are worried, and the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees — over the protests of the Sudanese government — has prepared a contingency plan for the expected influx.

Slavery makes a comeback

The crisis in the south already has struck and is spreading.

Southern Sudan, which includes many Christians and pagans, long has resented the power of the Islamic north. After Nimeiri imposed the *sharia* — or Islamic law — across the nation in 1983, a southern insurgency that had been quiet for a decade took up arms again. It has grown stronger since and now shows signs of attracting sympathizers from Moslem provinces to the north.

The rebel organization, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), is led by Col. John Garang, who was educated in Iowa. The SPLA has attracted support from the neighboring black African states of Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya, and Garang's daily radio broadcasts call for "the liberation of the whole of Sudan from Arab-Islamic-merchant domination."

SPLA forces recently captured the town of Kapoeta in Equatoria and are attacking government forces in Darfur and Kordofan. They have drawn increasing support from important northern ethnic groups such as the Fur in Darfur and the Nubians in Kordofan.

The Sudanese army is fighting back. One result is that all of the provinces of Bahr el Ghazal, Equatoria and Upper Nile have been cut off from international monitoring. There are only a few places one can visit safely. Private relief organizations formerly sent food into SPLA territory through Uganda, Zaire and Kenya, but renewed fighting last fall between Ugandan rebels and the Ugandan army, and between Zairean troops and rebels, closed those two routes.

Aerial photographs show that large areas of the normally fertile south are not being cultivated. Drought has hit some sections, and fighting in others has scared people away.

Several relief agencies have been examining hungry southern refugees now arriving in Darfur at a rate of 500 a day. A study last month by the British relief organization Oxfam found that two out of three children in a group of refugees from Bahr el Ghazal had lost all the muscle and fat in their arms. That is a clinical way of saying they were like skeletons. Oxfam said they would die if not given food and medical care right away.

More than 5 million people live in the three main southern regions. Officials in Bahr el Ghazal have asked the army to send aid for 2 million people they said are starving there. The governor of Equatoria said he needs aid for 900,000 people.

It took three months, however, for the army to organize its last relief effort. It took three weeks for a convoy to reach the besieged town of Malakel.

The army has been arming local Moslem tribes to fight the SPLA, and other tribes have bought weapons in the booming private market. These tribal militias often despise the local Christian tribes, such as the Dinkas, and Dinka refugees have accused the militias since 1984 of murdering whole villages, stealing cattle and enslaving women and children.

Recently a group of Dinka refugees living in a shantytown called Hela-Shok, on the outskirts of Khartoum, said they had left their village in Upper Nile after a Moslem tribe killed most of the adults there and carried off the children.

The Dinka refugees identified their village as Pharaing. They said the attackers were members of the Baggara tribe.

Until recently there was no way of confirming such incidents. As the war has spread from the south and into Darfur and Kordofan, at least one such case has been documented.

Last July, two professors from the University of Khartoum, Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud and Suleyman Ali Baldo, were in Darfur investigating a notorious massacre of Dinkas in the city of Dhien.

The massacre took place in April, and the professors interviewed several witnesses. They reported how members of the Rizeigaat, a Moslem tribe, had killed Dinkas and set them afire. They gave the professors lists of Dinkas who had been captured and still were being held.

Two escaped slaves — Abuk Diing, 12, and Abuk Thiep, 30 — also were interviewed. The study concluded that Rizeigaat tribesmen in Dhien were buying and selling Dinkas, who were being used as laborers and concubines.

Since the study appeared here in September, the English-language Sudan Times has run interviews with other former slaves. The issue is one of extreme sensitivity. For centuries, northern Arab tribes raided and enslaved black southern tribes, and the practice lasted into the 20th century.

"Actually," a Western diplomat commented, "that whole area of central Africa around southern Sudan, northern Uganda and Zaire seems to have reverted back to the jungle — to the conditions that explorers like John Speke found there 100 to 150 years ago, with tribal militias and slavery and God knows what else."

Desert advances every year

While civil war is pushing southern tribes northward, desertification is pushing northern tribes southward — and the western provinces of Darfur and Kordofan are caught in the middle.

The southward expansion of the Sahara varies from year to year. On average, the sands are moving south at a rate of more than 3½ miles per year, according to a team of West German researchers here on a six-year study by the Free University of Berlin.

The West Germans believe that, although overpopulation and overgrazing play a big role in the desert's expansion, Africa also is experiencing a climatic trend toward less rain.

This year has been especially dry for Darfur and Kordofan. The United Nations reports that at least 75 percent of this year's crops in northern Kordofan and Darfur have failed and that 1.75 million people there need emergency food now. The Sudanese government has enough grain on hand but is still asking Western donors for transport.

Darfur's security meanwhile is deteriorating. Regional officials have complained in recent weeks that hundreds of Libyan-backed and Libyan-commanded tribesmen have taken over several Sudanese towns along the border, from which they are making armed forays into Chad. Pro-Libyan politicians have said the gunmen are Sudanese or Chadian bandits.

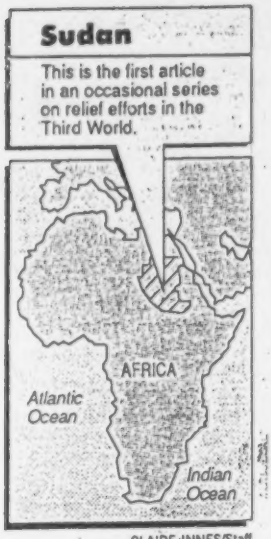
Even Sudan's cities are feeling the effects of so many troubles. UNICEF estimates that 500,000 displaced people from the south are camped out around Khartoum and that another 1 million Sudanese refugees have appeared in other major northern towns.

Hela-Shok, for example — the Dinka camp whose inhabitants recalled scenes of massacre and enslavement in the south — is perched on a garbage dump. Its pot-bellied children and malnourished adults, some suffering from leprosy and malaria, rummage in the garbage for food.

The government regards the Dinka — a proud tribe famous for their cattle-herding and their height — as potential supporters of the southern rebellion. Until October the government declined to acknowledge the growing camps' existence. The elders of Hela-Shok said they often are harassed by police.

Yet the government is not fully in control even in the capital. There are so many European and American relief workers around that sunburned foreigners muttering into walkie-talkies has become almost as common a sight on the sun-baked streets as that of turbaned men and veiled women.

"There are more internationals in Sudan now than there were British at the end of the colonial period," commented one U.N. official. He sympathized with Sudan's growing irritation.


Sudan
This is the first article in an occasional series on relief efforts in the Third World.
AFRICA
Atlantic Ocean
Indian Ocean

CLAIRE INNES/Staff

Sudan facts

- **POPULATION:** 25 million.
- **AREA:** 966,757 square miles, the largest country in Africa.
- **RELIGIONS:** 73% Moslem, 18% animist, 9% Christian.
- **CAPITAL:** Khartoum.
- **PRIME MINISTER:** Sadaq Mahdi.
- **REBEL GROUP:** Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA).
- **REBEL LEADER:** Col. John Garang.
- **GOVERNMENT:** Multiparty democracy. The centrist Umma Party formed a coalition government after the 1986 elections.

DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff

A Dinka woman holds her ailing child at Sudan's Hela-Shok refugee camp. Some camp residents suffer from malaria and leprosy.

Ethiopian refugees in Sudan escape death to live in limbo

MAR 3 1 1988

By Deborah Scroggins
Staff Writer

SHOWAK, Sudan — Rows of mounds mar the smooth, hot surface of the 15 miles of desert between Wad Sherife, a refugee camp, and the mountains that mark Sudan's eastern border with Ethiopia.

The mounds are the graves of thousands of anonymous Ethiopians who died at Wad Sherife — or died trying to get there — during the great famine of 1984-85.

One more rainy season, and the desert will be flat again. Yet 10,000 survivors of the famine remain at Wad Sherife, a camp outside the town of Kassala. These small men and handsome women in colorful veils are among the almost 700,000 refugees from Ethiopia's northern provinces of Tigre and Eritrea now living in a dreary limbo in the refugee camps and towns of the eastern Sudanese plain.

What they, their children and their 2,500 internationally financed caretakers do out under the broiling Sudanese sun is wait.

Those who live in the camps wait for food to be distributed — tomorrow, perhaps. They wait for work on a Sudanese farm — next month, perhaps. They wait for the remote possibility that the war in Ethiopia will end. There are 330,000 people living in the camps, managed by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Sudanese government.

Nearly 350,000 other refugees, who have escaped the camps and moved into Port Sudan, Kassala, Gedaref and other towns, wait for indentification cards, which they need to find legal work. They wait for letters from relatives, who may be sponsoring them to go to the United States. They wait for the end of the war in Ethiopia.

Some of them have been waiting for 25 years.

Depending on U.S., Europe

Many are still hopeful, though. One reason for their hope, according to a Tigrean elder at Tawawa, a refugee settlement near Gedaref, is that the refugees are so impressed by the power of Westerners. They find it hard to believe that Westerners who spend so much money to keep them alive would not also make it possible for them to settle somewhere once and for all.

"In our country, we were just dying," Glegzrabher Kasai, a frail man of 51, told a reporter.

"Now that we are here, we are just living to live," he said. "We get some aid but we don't get a solution.

"Now that we are here, the European countries and the American people are our mother and our father. So we are waiting for these countries."

Diplomats and aid workers scoff at the idea that decisive political action will be taken — action that might stop this region of Africa from lurching on endlessly from disaster to disaster. Even more startling, diplomats and aid workers are saying that one reason such disasters continue to be bearable is that a multimillion-dollar industry is in place to care for the victims.

One young American relief worker spoke of a growing sense that relief agencies may perpetuate the problems they are meant to solve. The realization is causing a kind of moral malaise, he said.

"If we are honest with ourselves, we have to admit that we have become part of the problem," he said, fixing his eyes on his desk covered with papers. "We make it easier for the Ethiopians to keep fighting. ... And the aid we give gives the Sudanese no incentive to solve the refugee situation."

Guerrilla wars over aid funds

In Ethiopia, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has been fighting for independence since 1962. The Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has been struggling for Tigrean autonomy since 1975. The various sides have shifted sponsors (Ethiopia under Emperor Haile Selassie, for instance, was backed by Washington, whereas revolutionary Ethiopia under President Mengistu Haile Mariam is backed by Moscow) but the rebels' tireless guerrilla warfare has not altered the basic military balance.

Decades of minings and bombings, however, have helped ruin more than 12 million acres of productive land in Eritrea and Tigre, according to a 1985 study conducted by Oxfam, a private aid organization. A major part of the population no longer can feed itself.

In the moonscape that is left, a strange inversion of the classic pattern of peasants feeding and sheltering guerrilla soldiers has occurred. Instead, the rebel groups and the Ethiopian government are all more or less competitors in their attempts to feed themselves and their followers with international relief.

This year — a year of severe drought — the EPLF and the TPLF are said to be feeding about 1.1 million people with emergency donations. But they are asking for enough food and trucks to let them feed an additional 2.3 million people.

The Ethiopian government, meanwhile, says it needs emergency food to feed an additional 2 million to 3 million people in Eritrea and Tigre beyond the 1 million the government already feeds.

Newcomers to be turned away

Those figures have risen rapidly and the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross have predicted, as they did in 1984 and 1985, that hundreds of thousands of hungry Eritreans and Tigreans soon may start walking to Sudan.

If they do, they will find the Sudanese army waiting at the border to send them back. With a civil war and a failing economy of its own, Sudan has lost patience with its neighbors' troubles. Last fall, it announced it would admit no more refugees.

About half of the Eritrean and Tigrean refugees already in Sudan have escaped the camps and are eking out a living on the fringes of society. They often are said to be better educated and more industrious than the Sudanese. The jobs they find are usually menial, however, and some have turned to illegal activities such as smuggling, prostitution and moonshining.

As for the refugees in the camps, they depend totally on relief agencies.

Sudan is one of the world's poorest countries and is growing poorer, and the refugees and relief workers have overwhelmed the country's customary hospitality. The town-based refugees compete with Sudanese for jobs and social services, while the camp-based refugees inspire greed and envy.

One of the campaign promises of the 2-year-old government of Prime Minister Sadiq Mahdi was to institute more restrictive policies toward these refugees. The government now says that refugees who have moved to town should be returned to camps. Police roundups have become frequent throughout the east. Refugees in towns all over the country soon will be required to identify themselves.

Distribution of land called off

The refugees also have been caught in the middle of a sad struggle between Sudan's refugee office and international aid agencies.

The government wants more foreign aid for the Ethiopians, and also more Sudanese government control over the aid. Saying that the urban refugees are straining Sudan's overloaded hospitals, schools and water services, the government is asking specifically for more international assistance to "refugee-affected areas," including much of the east. The government also has abandoned a plan to give the refugees land to make them self-sufficient.

Although most of UNHCR's $43 million budget in Sudan goes to pay for COR's administration of the camps, the government is constantly pressing it for extra funds. COR officials at their headquarters in Showak complained bitterly about UNHCR's alleged miserliness.

COR employs more than 2,000 Sudanese along the eastern border, and employs about 5,000 Sudanese around the country. UNHCR pays for all of them.

In response to Sudanese pressures, some private relief agencies such as Save the Children have established small development programs in Sudanese villages. Others have joined the UN's brickmaking, soapmaking and other projects, which are designed to make the camps self-sufficient.

But these projects suffer from the same troubles that plague other development projects in Sudan, such as shortages of supplies. They also inspire jealousy among the Sudanese.

'Now it's a nation of beggars'

One now can drive through entire towns and villages in eastern Sudan and never see a vehicle that does not say "Donated by the

UNHCR" on its side. Every bag of grain seems to be stamped with the news that it is a gift from the European Economic Community.

UNHCR argues that the refugees, if left to their own devices, soon would contribute far more to the Sudanese economy than they receive in aid.

"Yes, there are almost a million refugees in Sudan," said Shun Chetty, the UNHCR's deputy director, "but there are also 500,000 babies born every year in this country. Does the government propose to strangle them at birth? No. It's just that they know the more they [the Sudanese government] complain, the more money they will get.

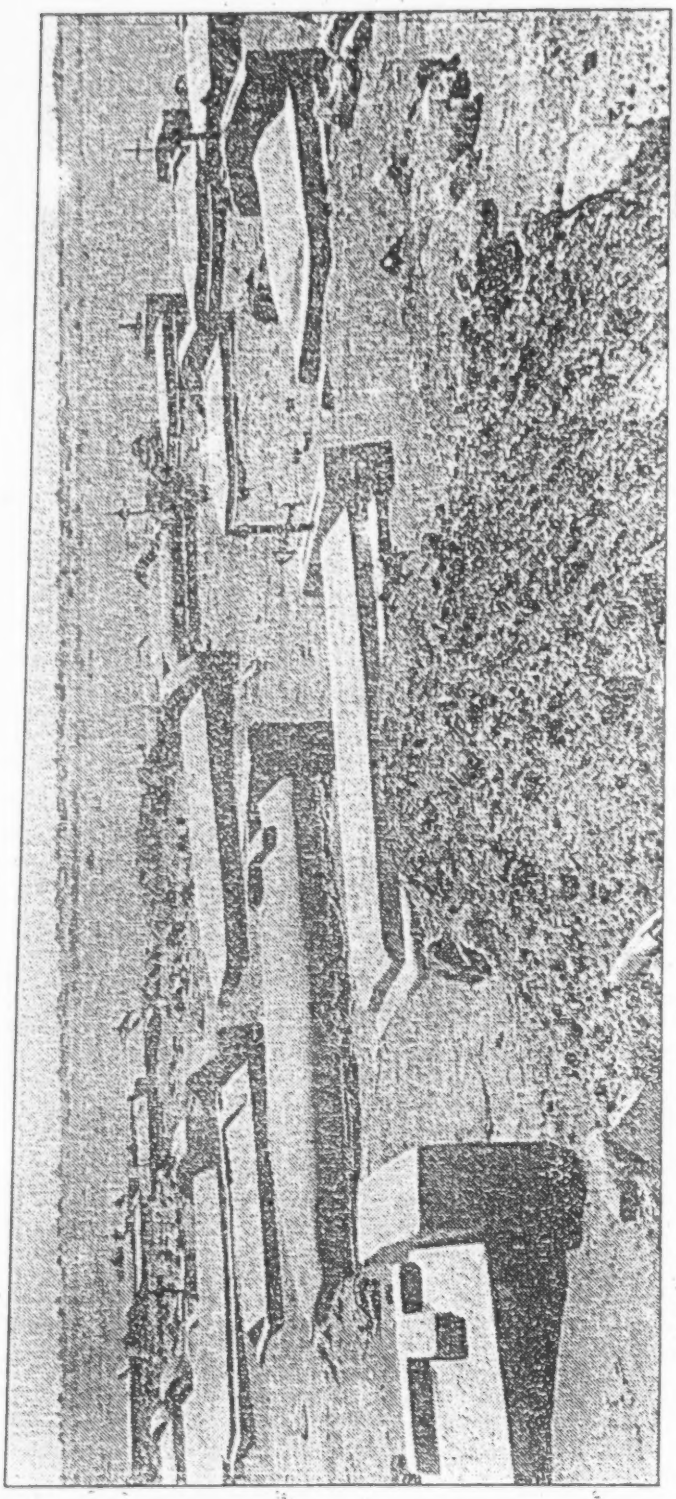
"Billions of dollars have been poured into this country and where is it?" he said. "It's tragic, really. This was a proud Moslem nation, and now it's a nation of beggars."

Nearly all the relief officials who have been in Sudan for more than a few months are well aware of the troubling questions that emergency aid to the region raises. But they believe that the consequences of pulling out would create too horrible a risk.

As the young American aid worker put it, "Would you be the one to leave and take the chance that thousands, perhaps millions of people might starve because of it? We're doing the best job we can in a difficult situation."

DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff

Refugee Glegzrabher Kasai displays bread baked from foreign grain.



DEBORAH SCROGGINS/Staff

Graves of Ethiopian refugees who perished in the famine of the mid-1980s dot the desert outside Wad Sherife camp in Sudan.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY BISHOP MACRAM MAX GASSIS, DIOCESE OF EL OBEID, EL OBEID, THE SUDAN

On behalf of my brother bishops and on behalf of those who suffer injustice because of their race, colour or belief, and in my capacity as Chairman of the Department of Communication and Media of the Bishops' Conference of Sudan, I appeal to the United States government to refrian from supplying the Sudan with arms and ammunition. In place of weapons, we offer the following recommendations:

A) How could the U.S. government best assist the displaced people of the Southern Region of Sudan?

It is a fact that the population of the Southern Region and also of Southern Kordofan are obliged to leave their areas due to the security situation. Hunger has become a weapon in addition to the other evils: killing of youth, rape of women and girls, sale of children as slaves. The exodus of Dinkas is a clear proof of this. Vulnerable groups -- children, women and elderly -- would never leave their areas and travel on cargo trucks for several days if they weren't forced to do so. Some parents were forced to sell their children to get sufficient money to evacuate their villages. In this way (they were convinced by Arab traders) to save themselves and their children. At the Cathedral parish we kept a record of all those who came asking for food and financial assistance to proceed to the Capital. In two months, 100,000 persons came to El Obeid and continued their journey to the North in search of security, food, and shelter. They also hoped to trace relatives or friends to assist them. The plight of the Dinkas is spreading to the Nuba people in Southern Kordofan. The Army obliged the villagers on hilltops to move to the vallies. Their huts were burned as well as their grain stocks.

We suggest the following:

1) Immediate relief to be sent to the displaced people: food, blankets, medicine. This aid should reach all identified areas. There are areas where the government will never admit as disaster areas. In such cases, NGOs should be the channel for distribution.
2) Pressure should be put on the government to accept aid and relief to be given through NGOs. There is a lot of corruption and unless humanitarian and non-sectarian relief agencies handle the operation, most of the food, medicine, etc. will be sold either by political parties or merchants or the Army.
3) In areas where the displaced live in camps or in identified areas by NGOs, water supply should be guaranteed (i.e. wells); health centers and dispensaries and schools are necessary. The government is not interested to offer them any service. On the contrary, the government sees in them security risk and expects them to go back to their area by denying them vital services.
4) Another important point to be kept in mind is that relief and rehabilitation should be offered in areas controlled by the government as well as those controlled by the SPLA. People who suffer from hunger are found in both areas.

B) What can the United States do to end the war?

It is only through pressure exerted by the U.S. and western nations that a peaceful solution could be reached. No one can read the mind of others, but one may deduct a conclusion by the behaviour of attitude of the government: Genocide of Blacks and Africans in the South and West. In a multi-racial and multi-religious nation, people cannot be governed by Islamic laws. It is fallacious what the Prime Minister keeps declaring: "Since the majority are Moslems, the Laws should be based on Islam." In

On another occasion, he stated: "We are the majority and we have the right and liberty to base a system of government on our religion. At the same time, we will guarantee the rights of non-muslims."

The citizens of a nation should be governed by a Law irrespective of their ethnic or religious affiliation. A Law that is accepted by all citizens. Muslims have no earthly or Divine mandate to guarantee or protect the rights of non-muslims.

We appeal to the U.S. government to exert whatever pressure they may have for just laws in the Sudan. WE DEEM THE ISLAMIC LAWS IN A NATION WHERE THERE ARE OTHER RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS AS AN INTRINICALLY DISCRIMINATING LAW AND AS SUCH, IT PUTS IT IN THE SAME APARTHEID SITUATION AS SOUTH AFRICA. If Apartheid discriminates against people because of their colour or race, Islamic Laws inflict in a country like Sudan discriminates against non-muslims and renders them second-class citizens.

The United States and the western European nations should NEVER offer any military assistance to the government. Arms and weapons will only encourage the government to indulge in killing the innocent and trample under foot the human rights of the population in the South and in the West.

The United States champions HUMAN RIGHTS. We would like to see this put in action. The U.S. government should not be reluctant to pressure the Sudan to abide by the Human Rights Charter of the United Nations on the assumption the Sudanese government will turn to the Eastern bloc. The U.S. government should stand with TRUTH AND JUSTICE.

We also strongly suggest that the U.S. government send a delegation to the Sudan on a fact--finding mission. Such a delegation should be free to move around the country and meet the people, travel to villages and centers and see with their own eyes the conditions of thousands of displaced people. The delegation should also be free to contact local and expatriate NGOs, church leaders, and above all the suffering people.

It is so interesting to see the super powers sit and discuss disarmament, control of nuclear weapons, etc.' Should their interest also be extended to any guns, rifles, which are also dangerous?

Before God, the Life of one human person is as precious and dear as a million lives. We are all His children and He created us out of Love and for Love.

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